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**Hague wins** Tory leadership



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Opinion ......4 Shabbat Shalom ..... 11 Sports.....19 World News ..... 6

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## Sources: Iran, Hizbullah plan to hit Israeli, US, Turkish targets

By STEVE RODAN

Iran has decided in coordination with Hizbullah to attack Israeli, Turkish, and US targets following Mohammed Khatami's election to the Iranian presidency, diplomatic sources said this week.

The sources said that on June 2, the Hizbullah Shura met in Beirut and decided in conjunction with its Iranian advisers to plan attacks against Israeli, Turkish, and US targets both in the Middle East and abroad. The Shura is said to be the forum where Hizbullab policies, particularly terrorist plans, are discussed.

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Martin Kramer, director of Tel Aviv University's Dayan Center for Middle East Studies, said the reports could be saber-rattling by the Syrians and Iranians, upset by new military-supported. Turkish government of Tansu Ciller, which is due to replace the Islamic-oriented Necmettin Erbakan. Kramer said both Syria

and Iran appear to be concerned by the rise of the pro-US Ciller to

power and the victory of the Turkish military to help oust

"When both Syrians and Iranians want something together, there's nothing better than tweaking the noses of the Turks with Hizbullah,"

**US** asks to see Peled over Arafat link to WTC bombing.

Kramer said. "It could be more noise than action on the idea of using Turkish soil for terrorist activities. The Turks play rough."

The sources said this was the first indication that Iran's terrorist policies would continue despite the election of Khatami, regarded as a moderate who had promoted economic reform and rapprochement with the West.

See IRAN, Page 12



Labor Party leader Ebud Barak (right) meets with Tel Aviv Mayor Ronni Milo in Ramat Gan yesterday amid speculation that Milo would leave the Likud following the resignation of Dan Meridor as finance minister. Both men said the meeting had been arranged before the resignation. Ikrael Smil

## Sharansky, Edelstein to boycott cabinet

By LIAT COLLINS, SARAH HONIG, and itim

Industry and Trade Minister Natan Sharansky declared yester-day he would boycon today's cabinet meeting for the second week io a row, joined by Yisrael Ba'aliya colleague Absorption Minister Yuli Edelstein, in protest at the government's failure to bonor its coalition agreement.

The move follows the failure of meetings between Yisrael Ba'aliya representatives and Prime
Minister's Office DirectorGeneral Avigdor Lieberman to achieve progress on the issue. It also comes as the opposition is mobilizing in an attempt to bring down the Netanyahu government

in three no-confidence motions to

be heard next week. At a Labor Party meeting yes terday, chairman Ehud Barak said the recent political developments following the resignation of

Dump Netanyahu calls come from new direction, Page 3

Finance Minister Dao Meridor require the party to make special preparations.

However, Barak said he does not believe Tuesday's no-confidence motions will succeed to bringing down the government.

See SHARANSKY, Page 12

## **Israel wants France to**

PARIS - Israel has asked France to help broker an agreement with IDF to leave the security zone, according to sources in the

Mordechai, who arrived here on Tuesday to attend the Paris Air Show, met yesterday with Freoch Defense Minister Alain

misery about the grave. Israel

Zamir, Singer's son from a mar-

\* 13 days

+ 8 days

#### Lehanon that would enable the Richard. See FRANCE, Page 12 entourage of Defense Minister

Isaac Bashevis Singer is no longer "noble." Nearly six years after Singer's death, the inscription on his gravestone in a Paramus, New Jersey cemetery was corrected this week. The original stone, which was engraved in 1992, called the Yiddish writer a "noble" laureate, The New York Times reported. Singer won the 1978 Nobel Prize for literature. 

Singer's friends and family error. Some thought the gravestone typo was an insult, while

"Isaac would have enjoyed the irony," said Eve Friedman, who with Singer wrote the play Teibele and Her Demon. "But there was something kind of sad about it. Isaac in that stone was the butt of a joke," she lold the Times. The correction doesn't end the

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### By ELDAD BECK Yitzhak Mordechai.

## I.B. Singer's 'Nobelity' gets a grave correction

riage in Poland, has said that if the NEW YORK - Nobel laureate writer had been buried in Israel, the grave would have been the destination of pilgrimages. The New Jersey site, he wrote in his book Journey to My Father, is a "God-forsaken place [that] would attract no one." EDDIE'S GLATT KOSHER Mediterranean Cruises

apparently were divided about the others found it amusing.

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## broker Lebanon withdrawal PM: Coalition will thrive

By SARAH HONIG

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu yesterday dismissed all talk of his coalition disintegrating, saying it would survive and function well for its full four-year term. He also promised to overhaul the economy and put

it on the world map. Netanyahu said that "in three years you won't recognize this country, it will have changed so much - for the better."

Netanyahu was addressing members of the Likud secretariat, who gave him a warm reception, despite the fallout following the resignation of Finance Minister Dan Meridor. Speaking about the coalition, Netanyahu said:

There are those who would like to bury it at every turn, but it will thrive and all of its component parties will remain within it. "When it comes to basics, they are not at loggerheads with this government's policy and agree with our foreign affairs and defense line, as well as with

what we are aiming to do io the socio-economic

"Inside the Likud, I find it hard to believe that our members will revert to the internecine factionalism of yesteryear. They will remember how we shattered

Depart, 13 Aug

Depart 20 Aug

Depart 25 Aug

into many splinters, and the upshot was that we lost to Labor, and we all know what disasters the leftist government brought upon this country during its tenure."

In reviewing the events which led up to Meridor's resignation, Netanyahu said that "wheo we came to power, we found an enormously dangerous overdraft. We had to quickly put the brakes on the economy.

For the past few months, however, the finance minister, the governor of the Bank of Israel, and I have been holding secret meeongs on bow to encourage economic growth. We are, in fact, a month behiod schedule due to certain affairs," Netanyahu said, presumably referring to the Bar-On Affair.

"A decision was a must and I had to make one. I was asked to bring the matter before the cabinet and I did so. Once the subject under discussion becomes known, there can be no waiting, because the the deliberations themselves influence the markets," he

explained. Meridor "opposed part of my economic plan and he has a right to do so. If his resignation was motivated by professiooal conviction and principle, then I respect it. If his resignation, however, was for other reasons, then it is wholly unjustified."

## Ministerial hopes for Ne'eman dim

By SARAH HONIG

The chances that former justice mioister Ya'acov Ne'eman would return to the government seemed to dim last night, and it appeared likely that two new Likud ministers would be coopted.

However, sources stressed that the the final word on Ne'eman has soll not been said. He returns from the US today and might express a wish to return to the cabinet. In that case, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu will face the

problem of where to put him. Sources in the Prime Minister's Office, however, feel that National Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon would be promoted to the Treasury, Tourism Minister Moshe Katsay would be promoted to National Infrastructure, MK

Michael Eitan would come in as science minister, and MK Sylvan Shalom would succeed Katsav.

Thus Netanyahu would be able to satisfy two of his most loyal supporters, Eilan and Shalom.

Arabs await results of cabinet crisis, Page 2

Only MK Shaul Amor, who had also sought the Science portfolio, vacated in January by MK Ze'ev Begin, would be let down.

Netanyahu's plan would alsokeep Tzahi Hanegbi in the Justice

See NE'EMAN, Page 12



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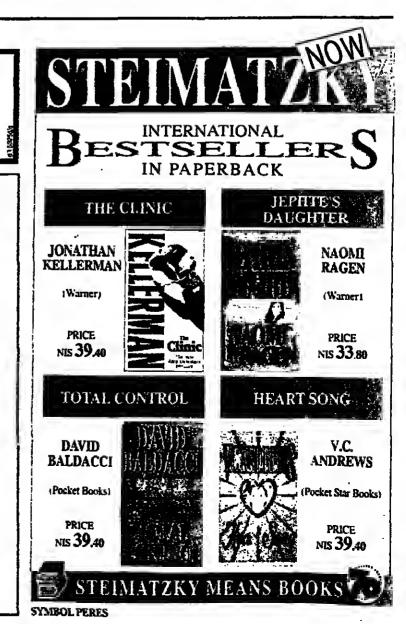
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## **NEWS**

#### Salameh given two life terms

The Erez Military Court yesterday sentenced terrorist Hassan Salameh to two life terms plus 15 years, after convicting him of 31 different charges, including the murder of a Palestinian who had cooperated with Israel and responsibility for the suicide bombing in Gush Katif in June 1995, in which a soldier was

In a separate action, hearings are continuing on his involvement in the suicide bus bombings in Jerusalem last year. Itim

#### Foreign Ministry gets new spokesman

Aviv Shiron, 44, former information counsellor at the embassy in Bonn, has been appointed Foreign Ministry spokesman, replacing Danny Shek who will take up the post of consul-general in San Francisco. Before Germany, Sbiron beaded the ministry's public affairs department and served as the spokesman for various peace delegations in Madrid, Washington, Moscow and during the peace talks with Jordan.

Other appointments approved yesterday include: Arthur Avnon, from consul-general in Chicago to director of the ministry's Jordan department, Amikam Levy as head of manpower abroad; and Amir Ayalon, head of domestic manpower.

#### Psychologists 'optimistic' about ending strike

The union of psychologists working for public institutions was "optimistic" yesterday about ending its strike after meeting with Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu. A union spokesman said the prime minister first wants to name a new finance minister, and will then instruct him to reach a solution to the nearly month-long strike, which was launched to protest against low wages for Kupat Holim and state psychologists. However, the psychologists contioue to maintain a protest vigil outside the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem.

Judy Sie Judy Siegel

#### High Court rejects Women in Green petition

The High Court of Justice yesterday rejected a petition by the Women in Green group against tomorrow's planned joint Israeli-Palestinian march in Jerusalem uoder the slogan "Jerusalem - Two Capitals for Two States."

Justices Shlomo Levin, Eliezer Goldberg, and Dalia Domer said the Women in Green had not followed proper procedures, including not trying to meet with the march organizers before filing the petition. The march is to proceed from Damascus Gate

#### Right-wing radicals arrested at Rabin grave

Seven right-wing extremists were arrested by police yesterday for alleged incitement while demonstrating near the grave of former prime minister Yitzhak Rabin oo Mt. Herzl in Jerusalem. They bad called for the "destruction" of Rabin's grave, saying he bad been a commander of the unit which killed 16 people on the Altalena off the Tel Aviv beach in June 1948.

#### Turkish sailor treated at Rambam

A sailor from one of the five Turkish Navy ships in Haifa Port for a rest and recreation visit underwent an emergency operation at Rambam Hospital last night. Deputy hospital director Dr. Zvi Ben-Ishai said the sailor had been admitted suffering from acute abdominal pains and it appeared that he was suffering from a bleeding ulcer. The Tarkish ships - two frigates, a destroyer, a submarine, and a supply ship mare due to sail today. David Rudge

#### Paratroopers get new commander

The IDF appointed Col. Gershon Yitzhak commander of the Paratrooper Brigade in a ceremony attended by OC Central Command Maj.-Gen. Uzi Dayan and senior officers yesterday. Dayan praised Yitzhak for reaching "this yearned-for posting," and wished success to the outgoing commander, Col. Beni Gantz, who is to depart soon for study abroad. Arieh O'Sullivan

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Prof. Steven Kaplan, (Hebrew University Jerusalem, Department of Religion Studies).

- Mrs. Ruth Yashin, The Israel Interfaith Association.

- Representative from the Konrad Adenauer Foundation. The evening will be conducted in the following way:

20:00 - Intermission and refreshments.

20:30 - Discussion Groups.

The discussion will be held in Hebrew and English *with simultaneaus translatia*n

# Fatah officials appear in Hebron

By MARGOT DUDKEVITCH and JON IMMANUEL

One border policeman was lightly injured and, according to Palestinian sources, Palestinians were hurt in the sixth

day of rioting in Hebron yesterday. At one of the checkpoiots between H-1 and H2, two plainclothed Fatah officials appeared for the first ome since the riots started - and told children protesters to go home.

As throughout the week, the rioting took place in Shallala Street and the surrounding side-roads that divide H1, the Palestinian-controlled area of Hebron, and H2, the area under Israeli control.

The IDF Spokesman said troops dispersed the rioters with tear gas and rubber bullets. Clashes broke out mid-moming and continued throughout the day. Some of the Palestinian rioters wore keffiyehs to hide their faces, responding to rumors that the IDF was videotaping the clashes in order to identify the key perpetrators. Palestinian sources claimed 10

firebombs were thrown at IDF sol-

Spokesman confirmed that fire-

bombs and stones were thrown at the troops, but would not say how many. At a meeting between General Security Service heads and Palestinian Preventive Security and Fatah chief Jibril Rajoub in Hebron on Tuesday, the PA was told that continued stone-throwing would not be tolerated.



A border policeman in Hebron aims past Palestinian women at youths throwing stones at his position yesterday.

#### BACKGROUND

## Arabs await results of cabinet crisis

by JAY BUSHINSKY

The domestic cabinet crisis has thrown a further crimp into the Middle East peace process, prompting Palestinian, Egyptian, and Syrian policy makers to ride out the storm and see whether they will still have to deal with Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu.

Senior officials in Jerusalem admit that the crisis-is having an impact on efforts to reactivate the peace process. Arab political analysts keep very close tabs on Israel's party politics,

and the news media throughout the Arab world have made the princi-

By MARGOT DUDKEVITCH

Members of the Council of

Jewish Communities in Judea,

Samaria and Gaza were outraged at

remarks attributed to council chair-

man Pinhas Wallerstein during a

tour with members of the Labor

Radio reports quoted Wallerstein

as suggesting that the Palestinian

Authority should be allowed territo-

rial continuity in the autonomous

areas, and that the roads in these

areas be designated under complete

Party in the West Bank yesterday.

pal players into household names. Reverberations of the drama that led to Dan Meridor's resignation as finance minister reached Jerusalem from oeighboring capitals and caused Israeli officials to suspect that the Arab assessments may have leaned too heavily on foreign press reports datelined here.

They have been taking the BBC too seriously," a highly-placed aide to \_\_on and we bope to reach a mid-Netanyahu said, contending that its die-point between both sides, so broadcasts foreshadowed the immi- that they will be able to resume nent collapse of the incumbent coalition and raised the possibility of an alternative leadership taking office.

See ARABS Page 14

Settlers rap PA road remarks

Yechiel Leiter, head of the coun-

cil's foreign desk, said last night he

found it difficult to believe that

Wallerstein made the remarks

thing to say. The suggestion that

Palestinian Arabs should enjoy ter-

ritorial continuity runs counter to

everything that the Yesha [Judea,

Samaria and Gaza] council

believes," he said. "Nothing can be

more detrimental to the cause of

Jews living in Yesha than the sug-

"If he did, then it is an impudent

Palestinian control.

attributed to him.

## Mubarak: Egypt will maintain peace effort

By ELDAD BECK

PARIS - Egypóan President Hosni Mubarak said here yesterday that his country will maintain its mediation efforts between Israel and the Palestinians until both sides resume talks on a peace settlement.

"We are talking with the Israelis and with the Palestinians about possible soludoos in many domains. The meetings are going on a solution," Mubarak told journalists after a meeting with Freoch Presideot Jacques Chirac. Prime Mioister Binyamin Netanyahu phoned Mubarak ear-

gestion of any type of Palestinian

According to council spokes-

woman Yehudit Tayar, Wallerstein

said he had been misquoted and his

remarks taken out of context. When

asked by members of the delegation

to comment on territorial continuity

for the Palestinians, Wallerstein

stressed the solution was not in con-

necting Judea and Samaria. Instead,

she said, he suggested a linkage of

roads between the existing

Palestinian villages, adding that they

should be under Palestinian control.

continuity," he added.

Hosni Mubarak (Efraim Kilshtok)

The Egyptian president arrived yesterday in the French capital for

a short, unofficial visit. Chirac said the importance of the meeting was that it took place hours before the opening of the G-7 summit in Denver. French officials said Mubarak had asked the European Union via France to back the Egyptian initiative.

"We both regret the current situation... and all the dangers that such a situation might cause to the stability in the region," Chirac said after the meeting.

Chirac informed Mubarak about the appeal issued by the EU at the end of its Amsterdam summit this week for a quick resumption of peace talks.

See MUBARAK Page 12,

## Jezzine residents protest Hizbullah bomb attacks

By DAVID RUDGE

Residents of the South Lebanese Army-controlled Jezzine enclave staged a mass demonstration in the Christian town yesterday to protest three bombings there the previous day. Four people were killed, including an SLA officer, and two wounded in the attacks.

Meanwhile, Lebanese newspapers reported yesterday that IDF and SLA troops had conducted bouse-to-bouse searches in At-Tiri in the western sector of the security zone, in an appareot attempt to track down Hizbullah collaborators who may have assisted in the planting of the buge roadside bomb which exploded alongside a Merkava tank on Sunday night.

Staff-Sgt. Ya'acov Algamis, 20, of Jerusalem, was killed in that attack and three soldiers lightly wounded. Originally, IDF officers said that the blast bad jammed the rear door and turret of the tank which had led to the two-hour delay in extricating the casualties. The inquiry by OC Northern Command Maj.-Gen. Amiram Levine, however, found that the soldiers had been instructed to remain inside the tank for fear there might have been other bombs in the area. It was originally reported that the wounded soldiers all suffered light injuries, thus it was decided it would be better to move the tank

before getting them out. Concern over the possibility of further explosive devices in the area was also why the rescue unit and reinforcements did not immediately approach the tank when they arrived, leading to a delay of 40 minutes in extricating the casualties.

#### Winning cards and numbers

In yesterday's daily Chance drawings, the winning cards were the ace of spades, queen of bearts, 10 of diamonds, and 10 of clubs. and the king of spades, 7 of hearts, 7 of diamonds, and king of clubs. In yesterday's Payis Hazak draw, ticket oumber 691652 won the NIS 1 million prize, while ticket oumber 054639 won a car. Tickets 899535, 793128, 405298, 391939, 521489, 191058, 145363, and 141060 won NIS 5,000. and 141060 won NIS 5,000. Tickets ending in 35649, 82894, 96699, 42900, 72519, 94982, 85958, 41700, 32073, 40989, 54425, 98826, 18171, 31553, 04360, 63074, 69092, 96990, and 63493 won NIS 1,000. Tickets ending in 655, 233, 675, and 218 wor NIS 100. Tickets ending in 36 and 37 argn NIS 30.

ending in 36 and 37 won NIS 30. Tickets ending in 0 and 7 won NIS 10.

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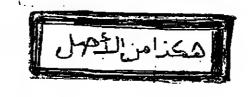


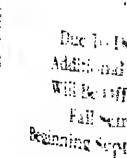
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#### The Likud yes, Netanyahu no," Likud MK David Re'em said over the airwaves yesterday, giving a pash to a move to find another candidate to challenge Netanyahu for the Likud leadership. With this statement, Re'em, a fieshman MK from Kiryat Ata, was joining the Likud's elder statesmen. former prime minister Yitzhak Shamir, who said Wednesday that he has a candidate in mind whom he would like to see challenge

Netanyahu. He named no names. Truth be told, Netanyahu has heard many such threats in the past. These threats began last year in settlement circles unhappy with Netanyahu's settlement policies, and spread 10 certain groups within the Likud afraid of what they said were the prime minister's strong-arm tactics to gain com-

plete control of the party. The difference between the idea being furthered now by Shamir and Re'em, and the threat to look for a different candidate heard from people like National Religious Party MK Nissim Slomiansky and Gesher's Michael Kleiner of the Land of Israel Front, is that while the latter group was using this threat as a way to gei Netanyahu to change his diplomatic policies, the former group is raising the idea because they are afraid of what the prime

minister is doing to their party. When Slomiansky broached an alternative candidate from the Right last year, after Netanyahu made it clear he was willing to redeploy in Hebron, he said it was

a way to pressure Netanyahu into changing his polices. The idea was that only with a threat from the Right would Netanyahu veer his

Dump Netanyahu calls

come from a new direction



David Re'em

own polices in that direction. What Re'em has in mind is changing the leadership because of fundamental problems with Netanyahu's style of governance.
"Today it is Dan Meridor," he said,

Tomorrow Yitzhak Mordechai, the day after, Limor Livnat. This will not end. I supported the Likud in the elections as a group, a movement. I didn't know that I was getting a man who would forget his voters, the people who elected him. He got onto a bus full of good soldiers, and drives them wherever he wants."

While the Mendor resignation has Re'em wanting to change the leadership now, Slomiansky said that

"from my point of view he [Netanyahu] is okay right now. The negotiations with the Palestinians are frozen, Netanyahu said he wants to forgo the interim agreement and go right to the final status, and building is continuing in Har Homa."

This illustrates the main problem Netanyahu's detractors will have trying to find a challenger: discovering any common ground between them, besides their dislike of, or disappointment with, the prime minister. For instance, Stomiansky said that "if Moshe Arens is Shamir's favorite candidate, I prefer Bibi."

Hagi Ben-Artzi, Netanyahu's brother-in-law, is another person who has been involved in trying to find a suitable candidate to challenge Netanyahu. But these efforts, he said, are concentrated on finding a religious figure who would be acceptable to both the National Religious Camp and the haredim. He, too, would not name names.

Ben-Artzi, instrumental in the previous elections in getting the religious community to back etanyahu, also said he envisions a Yitzhak Mordechai-Dan Meridor alliance forming in the Likud.

They complement each other well," he said. "Meridor has linle security experience, which Mordechai has, while Mordechai has little political and legal experience, which Meridor has.

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#### Hanegbi gives pointers on appointments

Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi (left) appears yesterday before the committee on appointing attorneys-general, headed by former Supreme Court president Moshe Shamgar (seated, third from right). Haneghi suggested that when the post needs to he filled, a five-person committee should he appointed to review candidates. The committee would then recommend a candidate to the cabinet, which can accept or reject him or her. If the committee's recommendation is rejected, it can make another recommendation, or dissolve itself, and a new committee would be formed.

## Ministry seeks to avoid diplomatic row over illegal foreign workers

#### By JAY BUSHINSKY

The Foreign Ministry is trying to avoid diplomatic contretemps with countries whose nationals have entered Israel illegally as day laborers by coordinating their expulsion and assuring decent working conditions for those who bear valid visas, a senior official said.

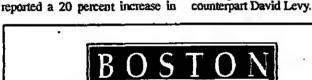
Of the estimated 300,000 for-

eign workers in Israel, more than two-thirds lack valid visas or work permits, according to the latest official tally.

the number of foreign workers legally here last year compared to

1995 - from 69,000 to 89,000. Although the government ordered the expulsion of at least 500 illegal entrants per month, this policy has

not been implemented, a source said. More than 60% of the foreign workers whose presence and employment in Israel is legal came from Romania. However, Foreign Ministry officials noted that there was oo discussioo of a quota system or other aspects of bilateral supervision during Romanian Foreign Minister Adrian Severin's meeting earlier this week with



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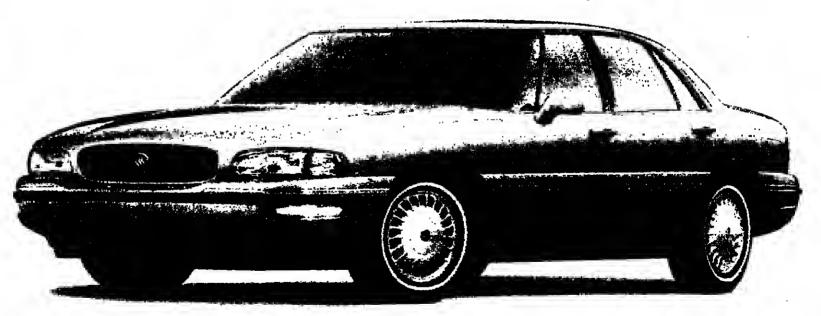
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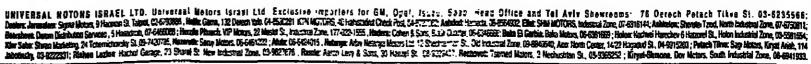


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## The path to self-destruction

In the old swashhuckler movies, the hero by himself and Meridor. would always face off against at least two foes at a time, and best both of them at once. It is hard to remember, however, a scene such as occurred this week, in which the master swordsman suddenly breaks off from the battle and pokes someone on the sidelines to bring them into the fight.

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu already faced an increasingly flammable stalemate with the Palestinians and a budding coalition crisis with Yisrael Ba'aliya, when he decided that now was the time to oust Finance Minister Dan Meridor. There are words such as "putsch" and "coup" to describe clever maneuvers by underlings to remove the man at the top; a word should be invented to describe the same act from the top down - against a minister whose threat consists of a reputation for honesty and diligence.

The claims of Netanyahu - and the solid majority of his cabinet that joined him - that the late-night vote on an arcane aspect of exchange rate policy was about a substantive issue, and not a ploy to remove Meridor, ring hollow. Meridor's main argument against the step to be taken was the risk of increased unemployment if the shekel were allowed to strengthen. Yet Foreign Minister David Levy, who normally would leap at the opportunity to pontificate on the employment issue, voted as if he were Milton Freedman.

The fact that seven ministers voted with Netanyahu, most probably with the knowledge that it meant the departure of Meridor, distributes the stain of this episode across the government, hut does not absolve Netanyahu of responsibility. Nor does the fact that Meridor was thought to have wanted out of the government, and therefore was susceptible to a relatively small push, lessen the brazenness of the maneuver.

It is not uncommon for policy decisions to be tinged with unrelated and sometimes illegitimate political considerations. This was not, however, a matter of political influence on an economic decision; this was pure political score-settling dressed up as a matter of high policy.

At the very moment that he was under pressure from Sharansky to make decisions in a more serious and responsible way, Netanyahu pushed for a change in Israel's exchange-rate mechanism in a manner that seemed more tailored to removing the finance minister than to forging sensible economic policies.

Now that Netanyahu has driven out Meridor, whose failure to rally round the flag in the Bar-On Affair was the final straw for Netanyahu, he will have to contend with Sharansky, whose demands for reforms will no doubt escalate. In addition to addressing what he says is a string of unfulfilled commitments from the coalition agreement, Sharansky is demanding that the premier accept the recommendations of the committee on government procedures chaired

After the cabinet initially balked at appointing some ministers to pre-scrub appointments before they go to the full cabinet, Netanyahu has agreed to hring to a vote Sharansky's revised appointment-review process.

The new process would add a layer of review by a high-level professional committee for a number of nominations that must be approved by the cabinet. This review would help ensure that nominations meet minimal professional and ethical standards. This would not, of course, guarantee excellence, nor absolve ministers of the final responsibility for the appointments, but would presumably weed out substandard or suspect nominations, such as that of Roni Bar-On for attorney-general.

The second portion of the Sharansky-Meridor recommendations, concerning decision-making procedures, is meeting greater resistance. Building on dozens of unimplemented recommendations from past commissions, the committee called for strategic discussions on key matters, a detailed revamping of the budget process, the designation of issues that demand regular follow-up, and the delegation of minor decisions to other forums to conserve precious cahinet time. In addition, numerous by-laws now ignored would be adhered to, such as having the cabinet briefed on every issue at least 48 hours before having to vote.

It was only two months ago, immediately after the release of the Rubinstein/Arbel report on the Bar-On Affair, that a combative, albeit somewhat chastened Netanyahu pledged on television that he had learned lessons and would make changes. Now that the High Court petitions on the matter have been rejected and he is legally free and clear, it seems that Netanyahu's ardor for self-improvement has largely dissipated.

Even if Netanyahu feels compelled to accept the Sharansky-Meridor prescriptions for reform, the real question is whether anything really will change. It is rare that mechanical or legal patches can effectively fill gaps in character or judgment. No set of procedures can protect against a prime minister who does not accept their spirit, and attempts to circumvent them at every turn.

Sharansky's proposals are essentially a lastditch effort hy a minister who is as frustrated as former science minister Ze'ev Begin and Meridor were with the way the government conducts itself. The difference this time is that, if Sharansky leaves, the government falls.

listen and learn th time, the government will self-destruct, if not now, then a few avoidable crises later. Sharansky's recommendations should thus not be regarded as a threat, but the way to save the government from its chronic lurching from crisis to crisis, and an opportunity to finally move forward on the nation's overburdened agenda.

# OPINION MEIR RONNEN© 97

## Duty to 'privatize the peace'

BENNY GAON

s a native Jerusalemite forced to celebrate his bar mitzva during the War of Independence, you can only imagine how much progress I felt we had made in our ongoing quest for peace when I flew from Amman to Petra in King Hussein's private

I was part of Prime Minister Netanyahu's first official visit to Jordan, and a paramount purpose of our trip was to explore tangible commercial opportunities between Israel and Jordan.

That was nearly a year ago, and I believe that this an appropriate time to reflect upon what has tran-

spired in the interim Readers of this paper have been treated to a broad spectrum of commentary - from left to right concerning bow our country ought to face its many challenges. The Netanyahu administration has been subject to plentiful doses of criticism and praise.

However, if there is one fixed star in this constellation of opinions, it is that ours is a nation hungry for peace.

That hunger was fostered during years of starvation; and when finally invited to the peace table, we ate ravenously,

We signed treaties with Jordan and the Palestinian Authority. Business delegations began visiting on a massive scale, seeking technology-sharing arrangements and other joint-venture partnerships.

Fueled by unprecedented optimism, our economy roared ahead. Consumer spending reached new

Some may argue that the accelerated pace led to a national state clear that the benefits of peace are region (Oman, Qatar, Morocco,

of indigestion. I disagree. In my view, the economic benefits of the peace process are irrefutable. The statistics speak for themselves

In the 1990s, Israel's GDP increased by over a third. The number of nations with which we share diplomatic relations nearly doubled. Foreign investment in Israel rose from less than \$400 million in 1992 to \$2.4 billion last year.

Israeli enterprises found themselves on corporate radar screens too precious to be squandered.

THE present administration, led by the prime minister, stressed that overriding theme during this week's Caesarea Economic Conference.

The government's initiatives, particularly regarding macroeconomic and fiscal discipline, have been admirable. These measures are needed to contain inflation and sustain responsible growth over a protracted period of time.

The market welcomed these

More than just a political or commercial objective, the peace process demands our collective national commitment

from which they had been absent in the past. Israeli products were able to penetrate new markets which had previously been inhospitable, or completely closed to them.

In total, the direct contribution of the peace process to the national economy has been estimated at about 2 percent a year, or over \$10 billion since the Gulf War.

However, these numbers tell only part of the story. The peace process also enabled

a redistribution of resources from defense to infrastructure, transportation, telecommunications and education. The felicitous impact on our national well-beingover the longer term is therefore inestimably greater.

Against this background, it is

developments. Investors feel that our government has begun to articulate - and deliver upon - its own corporate strategy. Several objectives, including privatization targets, have been declared and achieved

Over 75 percent of the NIS 4 billion expected by the government in privatization proceeds in 1997 is already accounted for. The stock market, paced by the return of the international funds and renewed local confidence, has performed extremely well.

Nevertheless, as laudable as these measures are, they cannot be divorced from the parallel economic imperative of accelerating the peace process. A host of countries, including several in the Tunisia and Egypt), continue to place Israel on hold, and commercial opportunities have been stifled by lingering political uncertainty.

As president and CEO of Israel's largest industrial enterprise, I have long felt that the business community has a duty to "privatize the peace." That was the purpose of my visit with the prime minister and many subsequent visits to Jordan.

In the meantime, to foster industrial opportunities in Jordan, Koor bas been a partner in a dairy, a retail mall, a minibus assembly plant, a battery manufacturing facility, an agrochemical formulation and distribution plant, and an investment fund with the Jordanian government.

I expect that similar undertakings will soon be possible in Egypt and, eventually, with our other neighbors in the region as

Nevertheless, the peace process is not just a political objective or a commercial objective. It is an existential objective that demands our collective national energies and commitment.

Neither the government nor the business community - nor anyone else, for that matter - can serve as the exclusive cynosure to guide this process. We must continue to work together diligently and without distraction to achieve lasting

We have already tasted the first fruit, yet there is an entire orchard that needs to be cultivated.

The writer is president and CEO

## Good guys vs. crooks in government

vaiks of life, crooked opera Ltors nearly always win out over the relatively honest in the short run. Neither cynics nor naifs can say for certain, however, whether the same is true in the long run.

In this week's dramatic showdown between the prime minister and his eminence grise, Avigdor Lieberman, on the one hand, and Finance Minister Dan Meridor on the other, ending in Meridor's resignation, there is not the slightest doubt over who belongs to which category.

The results of a quickie Channel poll on Wednesday night found that 45 percent of those polled said they believed Meridor's version of what had brought on his resignation, as opposed to only 19 percent who believed Netanyahu's

diametrically opposed version. Netanyahu asserted that be had not plotted to push Meridor out of his government, but said Meridor had left him no choice but to seek a showdown in the cabinet after "he refused to hudge even a millimeter toward a compromise with the gov-emor of the Bank of Israel [on the

shekel exchange rate band issue]." Meridor claimed that at the night-long session between the three at the Caesarea Economic Conference on Tuesday, he had, in effect, worked out a compromise with Governor Jacob Frenkel, but that Netanyahu, after first agree-

ing, had torpedoed it. In such a situation, outside observers who were not privy to that meeting have to fall back on the reputations of the two protago-

Meridor is the Likud's "Mr. Clean." He has, over the years, braved the wrath of his party col-

**POSTSCRIPTS** 

A MAKEUP manufacturer spe-

cializing in hues called "soot,"

"aspbyxia" and "mildew" has

announced it will stop its anti-

Barbie doll advertising campaign.

based Urban Decay, had taken out

ads in periodicals calling on read-

ers to express their individuality

by rejecting the Barbie doll

nage. "Burn, Barbie, Burn," the ad's

Mattel Inc., which makes the

Barbies, was not amused. The

company wrote Urban Decay

The company, San Francisco-

leagues and undermined his own political prospects by refusing to buckle under in the face of demands that Likud governments pack the government bureaucracy

He was also openly critical of Netanyahu's performance in the

Bar-On Affair.

finance minister, to boot?

**Both Meridor and Netanyahu were** 

looking for a pretext to bring about the

The fact is that Netanyahu preferred Frenkel, but flinched at the prospect of opposition from inside the Likud if be excluded Mcridor from a senior position in his cabinet. He also needed Meridor's rep-

Why, then, did Netanyahu

face from Netanyahn to screw up

It should also be recalled that taking steps to bring down Netanyahu in April, in the wake of the Bar-On Affair, would have run include Meridor in his cabinet and the risk of bringing Labor's in such a senior position as Shimon Peres back as prime min-

Netanyahu's one and only achievement in the past year has been to prevent Peres from continuing as premier, with all we now know about what that would have meant regarding far-reaching concessions to the Syrians and Palestinians.

But super-dove Peres is now out of the way, and the problem of voting against Netanyahn and bringing him down is thus less traumatic for Likud stalwarts like Meridor, Ze'ev Begin, Yitzhak Shamir and Moshe Arens.

Meridor is now saying that he will not vote for Netanyahu if he is the Likud's candidate next time around. Shamir echoes that sentiment, and Arens is only a little more circumspect regarding his opposition to Netanyahu.

Together with Begin, who quit Netanyahu's government several months ago, they form a formidable opposition within the Likud.

Netanyahu controls the Likud machinery sufficiently to overcome such opposition. But guaranteeing the continued support of coalition partners Yisrael Ba'aliya and the Third Way, whose constituencies are much more sensitive to the theme of good guys vs. crooks in government, is a very different matter. They might well bring on early elections.

The writer comments on public

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

**KILL SPEED** 

Ben-Gurion and Ben-Zvi

Boulevards. Killed and injured

Sir. - I refer to Peter Kingston's 25,000 frames on a single digital letter of May 28, regarding speedcassette, a storage cost of 1,000 phoing and what be calls "accidents," tographs per shekel. These technologies have been able to pay their way a euphemism for road deaths and through income from traffic fines injuries. and savings in road-crash costs. Mr. Kingston's conclusions on During the 1996 five-month speed-enforcement project in

speeding are out of date by at least five to six years and he is appar-Netanya, the overall casualty rates ently not aware of the recent successful speed-control projects in dropped by 50 percent compared England hased on the slogan, with 10 comparison towns, and speeds dropped by up to 20 percent 'Speed kills - kill speed." along the two high-risk roads -

Recent technology has solved the problem of excessive film costs digital traffic cameras store up to

#### SKEPTICAL PUBLIC

Sir. - Mr. Husseini's seductive vision of the future ("Our city," June 6) reads like a travel brochure: "a Palestinian state living peacefully with its neighbors." It is, be says, "very imaginative and creative." But is it sufficiently connected to reality? How to reconcile it with the PA-instigated murder of Arabs who sell land to Jews, the internal use of torture and repression, the tactic of threats and terrorism against the Israeli people, the propagandistic use of official lies, the amassing of weapons and the refusal to carry out basic ohligations such as the amendment of the PLO charter? How to reconcile the facts with Mr. Husseini's claim that the Palestinians are ready for his-

torical compromise?

I do not doubt Mr. Husseini's sincerity. He is to be commended for writing this type of article, which moves beyond the tortured logic of Israeli left-wing extremism and reaches ont to a skeptical Jewish-Israel public. However, after a near century of failed attempts to eliminate the Jewish presence in the land of Israel by violence, that skeptical public will have to be convinced that the rhetoric of compromise is more than a tactic of last resort. To he effective, the rhetoric will have to be backed up by facts on the

JONATHAN ROGAWSKI

#### **MICKEY MOUSE**

Sir, - If it were not so tragic, it would be funny. The idea of creatsome \$20 million (June 3), is ludimake Judaism a Disney theme.

ing an attraction along the EPCOT model for the "Jewish experience" at Heichal Shlomo, at a cost of crous and bizarre. This country would benefit by not trying to

Transforming a white-elephant

building into a tourist attraction

isn'i necessary, since Israel itself

exemplifies the living day-to-day

Jewish experience and we certain-

ly don't need a multimedia extravaganza to illustrate it. What's betler than going to the city of Jerusalem and visiting Yad Vashem, the Wall, the Knesset, the museums, the Haas Promenade,

The use of Heichal Shlomo to create a self-contained, imaginary miniature version of our beautiful reality is misguided, and a real Mickey Mouse of an idea.

along these two roads dropped from 15 to 1995 to 0 in 1996, in the period of the project, a 100 percent drop following speed reduction. It seems that the real world link

between traffic speeds and deaths not in accord with Mr. Kingston's preconceptions. He would be advised to restudy the Newtonian Laws of Motion and the kinetic energy-speed formula he learned in high school.

GERRY BEN-DAVID. Center for Driver Research Jerusalem.

#### ANOTHER RELIGION

Sir, - Your editorial of June 13 placed too much emphasis on the violence of the haredi community against their Reform and Conservative brethren at the Wall on Shavuot. While one can not condone violence against any-one, particularly fellow Jews, it is important to remember that there is an essential ideological difference that must be brought

Orthodoxy has always been opposed to any change in the fundamental beliefs of Judaism. All the tampering done by Reform over the years can only be compared to how Christianity evolved from Judaism some 1,500 years

able that Orthodoxy has, and will always, distance itself from any reforming movements, so as to ensure a continuity of authentic Judaism.

Therefore it is quite understand-

By sitting on the same religious councils, it implies that Reform is an acceptable part of Judaism. At this time, Orthodoxy must look out and welcome all Jews, but at the same time must shy away from these seemingly Jewish movements, which are no more than another religion. SAM MEYER

Jerusalem.

#### leadership of the Likud from the party's "princes" in 1993.

with party appointees.

Netanyahn, for his part, has spent his first year in office trying to wriggle out of jams he himself

showdown between them has created by his penchant for talking out of both sides of his mouth, an anatomical feat ordi-

nary people call lying. He has lied to presidents Clinton and Mubarak, to his own ministers and coalition partners, to his own party and to the public - not to mention the police interrogators who grilled him over the Bar-On Affair.

Yet much of this is beside the point. It is clear that both Meridor and Netanyahn were looking for a pretext to bring about the showdown between them.

They finally found it in the incredibly arcane issue of the tilt and breadth of the diagonal band that governs the exchange rate of the shekel against a basket of foreign currencies.

THAT Meridor and Netanyahu cannot stand each other has been clear since Netanyahu wrested the

The post-grunge makeup manu-

facturer has agreed, said spokes-

woman Wende Zomnir, who was

wearing soot mascara, asphyxia

eye shadow and UVB lipstick,

with a dash of plague on her toe

"It's been resolved and they're

Urban Decay, whose motto is

"We don't have a hlack, hlack

"Love your city - wear your city

to work," has its standards,

lipstick," she said. "Only a few

10-year-olds can wear that and

not going to sue," she said.

according to Zamnir.

look good,"

utation for political honesty as a fig leaf to cover what has proven to be one of the most politically thuggish governments in the country's history. Netanyahu's interpretation of

this week's High Court ruling -

that Attorney-General Elyakim

Rubinstein's decision not to pros-

ecute him in connection with the

Bar-On Affair had not been

"extremely unreasonable" - led

him to believe he could now shed that itchy fig leaf. Why didn't Meridor resign when the attorney-general issued his scathing report on Netarryahu's role in the affair in April; when Netanyahu clearly double-crossed him in opposing the Brodet Report on the capital market, or after Netanyahu worked out a deal behind

The best answer is that it took Likud loyalist Meridor time and an accumulation of slaps on the

NO BUSINESS thrives on

euphemisms more than the death

For instance: can you guess

what a Heirloom Pendant is?

neck, sealed in a gold pendant.

Collection was created by Terry

"Teardrop," "Infinity"

The Heirloom Pendant

Inside each can be permanent-

er, post-life - industry.

Aurora, Illinois.

Meridor's back on the budget?

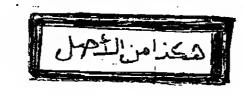
departed.

ly sealed a small amount of ashes or a lock of hair from the

The pendants cost from \$1,900 to \$10,000 each. It's a tiny urn for carrying a Dieterle said he noticed a loved one's ashes around your need "in the cremation market, for a very personalized keepsake, one that offers greater value, both in sentiment and

Dieterle, an undertaker from The trend in personalizing the The necklaces come in gold death experience is something and diamonds in three designs: we've seen grow over the last 10

vears." See what we mean about enphemisms?



headline read.

telling them to desist.

# The friendly majority

an Meridor's resignation from the Finance Ministry has been the big story this week. But we should not allow it to overshadow an important display of American friendship for

Jerusalem Pog

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It came on June 10, wrapped up in the vote by 406 members of the House of Representatives for a resolution that calls upon the president and the secretary of state "to affirm publicly, as a matter of US policy, that Jerusalem must remain the undivided capital of the State of Israel." (Only 17 members of the house were opposed.)

As a consequence of the vote, one might have expected the Knesset to issue some public expression of gratitude. But it was too occupied with other affairs.

The House of Representatives vote is a barometer of US support for Israel beyond the question just of Jerusalem's future. Three weeks earlier, incidentally, the Senate passed an identical resolu-

Yasser Arafat seems to be more on the ball than we are. The Palestinian Authority chairman grasped the significance of the vote better than the many Israeli politicians who repeatedly sound dire warnings of our imminent abandonment by the US.

And Arafat - who has relied too much on our media, which for months has prophesied a deterioration in America's stance regarding Israel - was furious. He vented his rage noisily in Hebron's casbah.

An ironic and sobering observa-tion: Last week's Washington majority - 96 percent - in favor of a resolution declaring united Jerusalem the sole capital of Israel is proportionally larger than the same proposal would elicit in the Knesset. It makes one think.

Arafat has been spoiled over the last few months by the succession of anti-Israel resolutions on Jerusalem in various international

The US broke the sequence somewhat by twice vetoing anti-Israel decisions in the UN Security MOSHE ZAK

Council - but each time it added its own reservations on Israel's activities in Jerusaleni. Congress's decision last week

not only erases those anti-Israel resolutions; it also evinces unambiguous support of Israel's position on Jerusalem.

Arafat's rage is understandable. The only conclusion left to him is that his vision of fomenting a rift between the US and Israel is an idle dream.

TRUE, administration officials must not allow them to sow panic take pains to stress to the Palestinians that it is the president

The whole world's against us? Don't you believe it!

who lays down policy and not Congress, and that is no more than the truth; but the administration will not be able to ignore Congress's unambiguously-stated position on Jerusalem.

Now it will have to do everything it can to prevent a head-on clash with Israel. "The US should never provoke confrontation with Israel," Gen. Brent Scowcroft, president George Bush's national security adviser, wrote recently. suggesting an alternative means of pressuring Israel.

Last week's resolution aside, the House of Representatives has made amendments to the State Department Allocations Law in line with giving practical support to Jerusalem as Israel's capital; and Congress has allocated \$100 million over two years for a US embassy in Jerusalem.

Even more important, it has taken legal steps to render the American Consulate in Jerusalem subordinate to the US Embassy. Implementing these steps would do away with the corrent anomaly whereby the consul-general in Jerusalem represents the US to the Palestinian Authority in Gaza,

Applying the lessons

of Bar-On

while the ambassador in Tel Aviv is accredited to Israel's government in Jerusalem.

The administration will do its utmost to delete those paragraphs detailing the practical measures recommended by Congress. But it cannot disregard the spirit in which they were made.

Our government, in neglecting the consulate issue, implied that it was of little significance; it therefore fell to 406 congressmen to take the matter into their hands.

There are those who will try to dampen any enthusiasm for last week's friendly vote. But we by citing the UN General Assembly's anti-Israel votes on Har Homa, or other condemnations of Israel by other international bodies.

The weight of the Congress vote is incomparably greater than any UN Assembly decision could be.

In its resolution, the House of Representatives praises the Israeli administration in Jerusalem over the 30 years since the city's unification. It says: "The Congress strongly believes that Jerusalem must remain an undivided city in which the rights of every ethnic and religious group are protected, as they have been by Israel during the past 30 years."

So it isn't true that the whole world is against us. That friendly majority on Washington's Capitol Hill is stronger than the knee-jerk majority in New York's UN building, which can always be relied upon to support any proposal condemning Israel.

Arafat's throwing stones in Hehron won't alter American public opinion. Congress in effect said as much last week.

The sooner the PA leader shakes off the intoxication induced by those other votes against Israel and rids himself of the illusion that he can isolate us, the sooner he is ready for compromise, the better his chances of profiting from the negotiations will be.

The writer, a veteran journalist, comments on current affairs.

## From Ayyash to McVeigh

Tow is Binyamin Netanyahu applying the lessons learned from the Bar-On Affair? Let's hope that the current crisis over monetary reform is not

Did Netanyaho stage the Caesarea showdown with Dan Meridor Monday night despite the fact that the finance minister was due to leave that evening for an urgent meeting with US Secretary of State Madelaine Albright and Crown Prince Hassan, or because

Did Meridor's opposition to the Bar-On appointment enter into it? There is more than a slight suspicion that the foreign currency account is not the only one that Netanyahu is interested in settling. All's fair in love and war, and

especially in politics. The eupboria induced by the High Court decisions on Sunday brought out the killer instinct on Monday.

If Netanyahu misunderstands the High Court judgments in the Bar-On Affair and thinks that he has been cleared, the court itself is partly to hlame. In a series of decisions, it has created the impression that sitting in judgment on the political process has become a udicial function.

Hence, when the court declines to intervene, as in Bar-On, there is a misapprehension that the politicians have come out clean. Even express declarations io the

opinious that the court was deciding on only the criminal, not the normative aspects of the case, went largely unreported.

Justice Yitzhak Zamir weot so far as to add to one of his opinions a section entitled "On Law and Ethics." In it, he warns against going too far in turning ethical norms into legal rules.

An excess of legal prohibitions in public life, Zamir maintains, would be difficult to enforce, Section 1. The section of the sectio and would remain on the law books as dead letters. The enforcement of ethical norms in public life, be declares, is the function of the political process, with the ultimate accounting at

election time. In one of Sunday's High Court cases, Zamir authored the principal judgment rejecting a petition to order the government to create a judicial commission of inquiry to go into the non-criminal aspects of the Bar-On Affair. This was a return to a position Zamir bad taken more than three decades ago during the Lavon

Affair. David Ben-Gurion, then out of government, had demanded a judicial commission of inquiry, a demand that in 1968 led to the present law on investigatory

commissions. Instead, the justice minister, The second secon Pinhas Rosen, set up a cabinet committee of seven ministers, ALLAN E. SHAPIRO

which he chaired, to investigate ation in Egypt, followed by a cover-up involving perjury, suborning of witnesses, and the falsification of documents.

The committee of seven cleared Ben-Gurion's nemesis, Pinhas Lavon, the former defense minister, of all responsihility. Rosen asked Dr. Yitzhak Zamir, theo a young law lecturer at the Hebrew University, for an opinion.

Zamir concluded, in a 67-page opinion, that the government had

if Netanyahu thinks that he has been cleared in the affair, the High Court is partly to blame

the discretion to refuse to appoint a commission of inquiry under the prevailing law, and was within its rights in opting for the committee

AS in his 1965 opinion on the

Lavon Affair, so in his present judgment in Bar-On: Zamir upholds the refusal of the government to appoint a judicial commission of inquiry. However, uoder the present

law, he declares that the negative decision of the government is subject to judicial review, and would be reversed by the High Court if it went beyond the realm

The range of discretion that the government enjoys on such a matter is so broad, he contends, that it is difficult to imagine a concrete case in which the court would reverse a decision of the government not to go the judicial investigation route.

In the Bar-On matter, Zamir points out that "there are few affairs that were investigated so thoroughly by the police." That leaves open precisely the area Zamir delineates as the ethical one, in which the police presumably have no role to play.

Ethical purity, however, is a legitimate area of concern for the state comptroller, where governmental action is concerned. A report hy the state comptroller can trigger the creation of a judicial commission of inquiry.

This was the case with the Bejski Commission, which investigated the rigging of the stock market for bank shares, following the report of then state comptroller Yitzhak Tunik.

The catch is that while the state comptroller can recommend a judicial inquiry, the decision to establish one is left to the Knesset the so-called "mishap" of 1954, a State Control Committee, which has a majority representing the coalition parties.

Unless there is a break in party ranks, there are few cases in which the committee would decide on the creation of an inquiry commission against the wishes of the government.

The lessons of the Bar-On Affair, therefore, are twofold. One is that the law should be changed to permit the state comptroller to initiate the creation of a judicial commission of inquiry on the basis of his own preliminary

As the law provides, the comptroller would refer matters involving criminal prosecution to the police. The comptroller's job is the protection of standards of sound administration in government, including ethical rules of public behavior.

The second lesson is more in the nature of a premonition. We have seen how the people around Netanyahu go about choosing an attorney-general.
It remains to be seen how they

will decide on a candidate for the post of state comptroller when the term of the present incumbent, Miriam Ben-Porat, expires.

The writer comments on legal and

MODERN DANCE:

JAZZ:

CHARACTER:

The debate will now begin . McVeigh truly deserves to die for the murder of 168 men, women, boys and girls in

Oklahoma City. Sure, the jury has spoken, twice oow. The penalty is in line with Federal law. The horror of the crime is beyond measure or com-

Sounds like a lock on plunging a needle into McVeigh's arm one

But will that needle ever reach

McVeigh? Should it? Moral opposition to the death penalty has already come from Bishop William S. Skylstad, chairman of the US bishops' Domestic Policy Committee, who believes executing McVeigh "would tragically perpetuate a terrible cycle of violence and further diminish

respect for life...." The law itself is untested; its constitutionality has never been reviewed by the Uoited States Supreme Court.

Cost, too, becomes an issue. Is it worth the \$3 million in taxpayerfunded legal fees that it will cost as the verdict and peoalty are appealed through the legal system, compared to the \$1 million it witt cost to keep McVeigh in prison for the rest of bis life?

Moral and legal opposition and financial considerations aside, is

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STEPHEN M. FLATOW

there another reason that McVeigh should not be executed? Is there a lesson to be learned by others, not from his death but from his life one to be spent, as long as he lives. behind bars?

Each spring, Arab youths in the

along with his victims'. That is the way to meet Allah, so

autonomous territories stage a

potential suicide bombers are told. Last year, wheo notorious "Engineer" Yihye Ayyash, responsible for dozens of deaths in Israel, met his end via a booby-trapped telephone pressed to his ear, bis

Execute a terrorist, and he becomes a 'glorious martyr.' Leave him behind bars, and others might not follow his example

mock bombing attack using a funeral through the streets of Gaza cardboard cutout designed to resemble an Israeli bus.

We know it's an Israeli bus, because we have seen them all too often on the TV news: blown apart, twisted, with missiog windows and blackened frames and an Israeli soldier looking through the wreckage for God knows what.

This annual mock attack is staged to mark a "great victory" over hapless folk riding the bus to work, to school, or a brief vacation in the Gaza Strip. It also commemorates the death

of the suicide bomber - the martyr for the cause of Palestinian freedom - who takes his own life was attended by over 200,000

Palestinian Authority President

Yasser Arafat, Israel's peace partner, took to the roof and praised Ayyash as one of the great martyrs for the Palestinian cause. So too does Arafat praise the other attackers of tsraeli buses.

They are heroes because they died and took Jews with them. And because they are praised as martyrs, others seek to emulate them. Maybe something would have

been gained had Arafat not turned Ayyash and others like him ioto martyrs. Maybe the next candidate to be a suicide bomber would not

have seen glory in his own death. enough to stop the next impressionable Arah youth from packing dynamite around his waist or in a shopping bag and walking onto a hus or into a crowd at an outdoor

EXECUTE Timothy McVeigh. and again we run the risk of creating a martyr - the same way that David Koresh and Waco became a fixation for McVeigh.

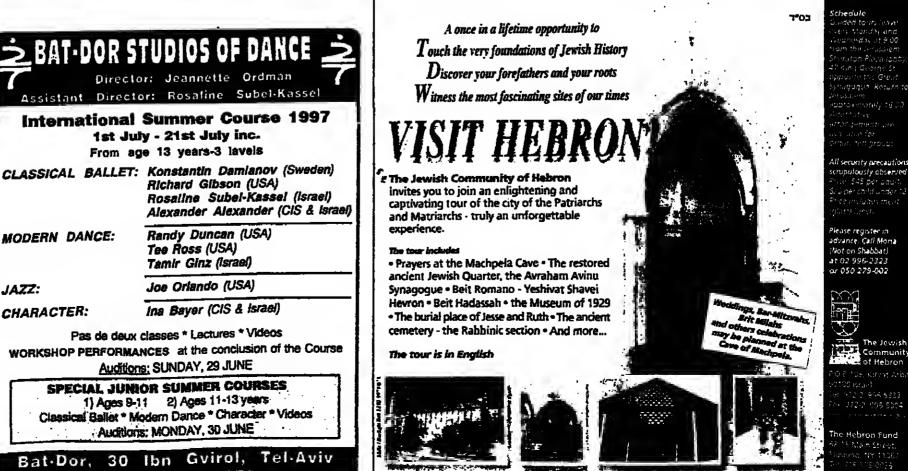
Execute Timothy McVeigh, and bis photograph will go up on the bedroom walls of skinheads and in the dark meeting rooms of white supremacists and anti-government

militias around the US. If Waco was a harbinger of McVeigh's act in Oklahoma City, why let his execution serve a similar purpose for some other sick

If, oo the other hand, we let McVeigb live for the rest of his life in prison, there is no glory. ... there is no martyrdom. And, possibly, there will be no more . attacks agaiosi Federal office buildings. I think it is worth the gamble.

The writer is the father of Alisa ...

Flotow, who was killed in 0 serror. ... ist attock near Kfar Dorom on April 9, 1995.



The officers, members and staff of Bnai Zion extend condolences to our immediate past-president Rabbi REUBEN M. KATZ on the loss of his brother

SAMUEL

Alan G. Hevesi President

Mel Parness Excecutive Vice-President

A memorial service and unveiling In loving memory of

EVA NARROW (SEGAL) 577 will take place on Monday, June 23, 1997 (18 Sivan 5757) at 5 p.m. at Shikun Vatikin Cemetery, Netanya. We will meet at the gate.

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# Hague wins Tory leadership

LONDON (AP) - Ex-Welsh Secretary William Hague, 36, yesterday won the leadership of Britain's Conservative Party, becoming the party's youngest leader in 200 years.

Hague, from the center-right and an opponent of Britain ever joining a single European currency, defeated ex-Treasury chief Kenneth Clarke, the party's leading pro-European in a third round bailot by 90-72 votes.

John Major stepped down as leader within hours of the Conservatives' crushing defeat in the May 1 election at the hands of Tony Blair's Labor Party. Hague, 36, clinched victory after winning the backing late Wednesday of former prime minister Margaret Thatcher, the standard-bearer of the right wing.

Hague, now leader of the oppo sition, faces a daunting task in trying to rebuild the party, trau-matized by its landslide defeat by Labor after 18 years in power.

The scale of the Tory defeat was due partly to splits over closer relatioos EU, particularly right-wing demands to rule out Britain joining the single cur-

Lady Thatcher did not have a vote in the ballot but remains an influential figure in the party right-wing.

Hague won despite a stumble



William Hague

Monday when he said he would insist the party's top spokesmen rule out joining a single currency

That stipulation may eliminate Clarke - who rates nationally and among grassroots activists as the most popular Conservative from the party hierarchy.

A national survey of chairmen of local party branches released Thursday by Tory headquarters showed Clarke with support from 389, compared to 260 for

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Iraqi trade unionists with a portrait of Saddam Hussein protest in front of the Turkish embassy in Baghdad yesterday, calling on Ankara to withdraw its troops from northern Iraq. The Turks are on a mission to crush Kurdish separatists who keep their bases inside Iraq as they fight for independence from Turkey.

## Turkish president assesses PM candidates

ANKARA (AP) - President could govern without the Islamic Suleyman Demirel yesterday sounded out political leaders before designating a successor to modern Turkey's first Islamic

premier. Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan resigned to thwart pressure from the military, which was angered over his attempts to put a stronger Moslem stamp on

Erbakan was hoping that his Islamic-oriented Welfare Party could remain in power by staying in a coalition with the center-right True Path Party. True Path's leader, Tansu Ciller, would serve as premier, according to his plan. The outcome depended on

act quickly. Demirel met first with main opposition leader Mesut Yilmaz, head of the conservative

Demirel, who has said he would

Motherland Party. Yilmaz offered himself as an alternative to Ciller, saying he

party's support. Demirel was leaning toward that option, Yilmaz told reporters after the meeting.

The country needs a government to protect (the secular) system ... and we are ready to take responsibility," he said.

Neither True Path oor Motherland alone can muster enough votes for a majority in Parliament, which must approve the government. Mrs. Ciller and Yilmaz are bitter rivals and are unlikely to join forces themselves to keep out Welfare.

Under an agreement between Erbakan's Welfare and True Path, she would lead the country to early elections within four months.

But several obstacles remained. Tradition calls on Demirel, an independent, to designate the leader of the main opposition

party - Yilmaz, Mrs. Ciller similarly may have trouble gathering enough support.

Although she bas the outside support of a small ultra-nationalist party which gives her a majority backing in Parliament, defections from her own party may prove troublesome.

It was also unclear if the new setup would be satisfactory for the generals.

Erbakan angered the secular establishment with his attempts to allow female civil servants to wear Islamic outfits and a decision to change working hours to fit fasting hours during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan.

Aside from such symbolic moves, the generals also were outraged by heightened calls for an Islamic regime at rallies and in speeches by Welfare deputies.

The military issued its first ulti-matum to Welfare in February. After Erbakan appeared defiant, it got harsher and warned that it would crush the Islamic political movement with the use of arms if

## Jospin program angers Right

conservative lawmakers, Socialist Premier Lionel Jospin yesterday proposed a 4 percent rise in the minimum wage and vowed to block the selloff of public services.

In his first National Assembly speech since his leftist coalition came to power in a stunning June parliamentary runoff victory, Jospin also promised to revamp the former right-wing government's tough immigration laws.

The French made a choice full of hope but heavy with demands," Jospin said. "We want to give a precious thing back to the country ... a meaning." Jospin had been under pressure from the Communists in his coalition to grant the rise in the minimum wage, currently at about 6,400 francs (\$1,100) a month.

In proposing the 4 percent increase, Jospin called it "the strongest rise in buying power over the past 15 years for that salary level." Conservatives, shouting repeatedly during the speech, howled in their loudest

Jospin said he opposed privatizing public sector industries "with-

With great sorrow we announce

the passing of our beloved

SYLVIA GAFFEN

on June 18, 1997

Deeply mourned and very sadly missed

by her loving:

Children, Ros and Len,

Grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren

Dave and Rosie.

**Annette and Lionel** 

Husband, Joe

PARIS - Over angry shouts by out justification in the national interest." Alluding to the phone company France Telecom, he mentioned telecommunications, electronics and "other sectors." But Jospin underlined that "adaptation will be necessary to maintain our level among the most

developed nations of the world." Jospin proposed a plan to build 100,000 dwellings and renovate l million others to expand housing and fight record 12.8 percent unemployment. He also called for an increase in studeot aid but stopped short of other new programs pending a study of the state budget to be completed

next month. The new premier, with whom conservative President Jacques Chirac must now share power. won the vote by blasting the conservatives' inability to cut the jobless rate with market-oriented policies of cutting spending and business taxes.

Instead, the left bopes to stimulate job-creation by putting more money in employees' hands and by cutting the work week to spread jobs around

(News agencies)

## 'McLibel' decision makes hamburger of activists

LONDON (Reuter) - After the longest trial in English legal history, two penniless activists were found guilty of libelling hamburger giant McDonald's and ordered to pay £60,000 (NIS 350,000) in damages yesterday.

Judge Rodger Bell found that the statements in a six-page pamphlet published by Helen Steel, 31, and Dave Morris, 43, in 1984 that McDonald's was responsible for starvation in the Third World, destruction of rainforests and for selling unhealthy food "injured the plaintiff'a reputation." But other allegations that the fast food group's advertising was exploitative of children, that it was responsible for cruelty to some animala and that it paid low wages were accurate, he said.

statements I found to be untrue. Others were true," Judge Rodger Bell said in his two-hour summation of the "McLibel" case that attracted worldwide attention.

Both sides claimed victory after the judgement. "For the sake of our employees and our customers, we wanted to show these serious allegations to be false and I am pleased that we have done so." Paul Preston, chairman of McDonald's Restaurants Ltd (UK) said in a later statement.

Morris and Steel, who conducted their own defense during the 313-day trial after being denied state legal aid, said the trial had vindicated McDonald's critics. Despite the overwhelming odds

.\_the judge has found McDonald's guilty of exploiting children, of cruelty to animals and of having an anti-union attitude." Steel said. We wanted to show by example you can stand up to even the most

powerful adversary," said Morris. The crusading pair vowed to take the case to the European Court of Human Rights to challenge English libel laws: Because they have no money they could oot pay the damages, they added.

In deep sorrow, we announce the passing of my dear wife, our mother, sister,

**RUS ELISHEVA** 

bas

HARAV CHAIM OZER CHAIT

We are grieved by the sudden and tragic loss of Rus.

We mourn together with the Chait and Zwick mishpachot.

Her chesed and ahavas Torah will act as an everlasting light

which will continue to burn in our hearts.

K'lal Yisroel has suffered the loss of a true bas Torah.

We will not forget her.

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#### **ESTHER CHAIT**

grandmother and great-grandmother

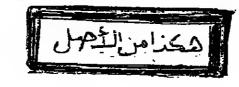
Daughter of Reb Baruch Mordechai Wolkovitch 71

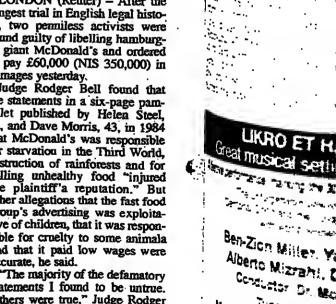
The funeral will take place today, Friday, June 20, 1997 (15 Sivan 5757) at 11:00 a.m., at the new Rishon Lezion cemetery.

We shall meet at the cemetery entrance.

Shiva at the "Ad 120" retirement home, Apartment 2, 40 Smilanski, Rishon Lezion.

The Bereaved Family





Alberto Mizzani, [ Conductor Dr. Mar Nann Auditorium, Ti 

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in front of the Turkin ops from northern Ira heir bases inside Iraq

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Although she has the one poen of a small ultra-nation rty which gives her a man cking in Parliament defens om her own party may pe sublesome.

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The Jerusalem Post Friday, June 20, 1997

# NEWSINFOCUS

# The rise and fall of an 'outsider'

As soon as Dan Meridor became a threat to Binyamin Netanyahu, his fate was sealed. Herb Keinon reports on the roots of a showdown

whiny milquetoast without a trace of backbone is the Dan Meridor image perpetuated over the last year hy the popular satirical show, Hartzufim: Meridor's puppet is the wimp who can't stand up to anyone; the nehhish at the beach who, if you just blow hard enough, will simply wither

This week Prime Minister Netanyahu hlew and blew, hnt Meridor stood his ground. Meridor the hartzuf never puts up a fight; Meridor the man showed that he can.

Granted, he lost. In fact, he received a drubbing - going from the lofty Finance Ministry into the proverbial political desert. But at least he freed himself of his hartzuf image. Ben-Gurion and Sharett, Peres

and Rabin, Shamir and Levy just a few of the duos in Israeli politics who, for long periods of time, couldn't stand one another. Netanyahu and Meridor have now earned their rightful spot on that list.

The prime minister, as he made clear in the various postfight interviews he granted, would have us believe that the battle over the "diagonal mechanism," which restricts fluctuations in the shekel exchange rate, was a legitimate disagreement between those charting the country's economic strategy. That the battle began just a day after the High Court of Justice ruled in Netanyahu's favor on the Bar-On Affair could, therefore, be chalked up to coincidence.

But Meridor, in his own interviews, said that economics was the rationalization for the battle, not the reason.

"It is strange to me that he [Netanyahu] began to be interested in the diagonal mechanism and the safety bands. In my eyes this does not seem real. It is very strange," he said.

The real reason for the fight, he intimated, was an attempt by the prime minister and "those around him" - a reference to Minister's Office Prime Avigdor Director-General Lieberman - to settle political

accounts. The account is lnng. And, as Likud MK Ruby Rivlin quipped, "Netanyahu has a long memory, and Lieberman erases nothing.

ON THE surface, said Rnnit Vardi, author of the just-released book on Nctanyahu titled "Bibi: Who are you, Mr. Prime Minister?" the two men have much in common. They are close in age: Meridor is 50, Netanyahu, 47. They both grew up in Jerusalem, their fathers were both invulved in Revisionist politics. They both reached the rank of captain in

the army. There, she said, the similarities end.

Whereas the Meridor family was well-accepted in all sectors of society, Netanyahu's family was not even accepted by all those nn the Right.

"Netanyahu's father was part of the small Jabotinsky circle on the Right," Vardi said. "They were not even accepted by the lrgun circle. While they were the outsiders, Meridor's family was very much on the inside."

This inside-nutside dichntomy became even greater when the Netanyahn family left the country in the 1960s for an extended stay in the US

"Netanyahu grew up in an American milieu," she said. "Meridor was very much the The same dichotomy was true

within the party. Meridor worked his way up from within the Likud, becoming the cabinet secretary to Menachem Begin in 1982, a Knesset member in 1984, and justice minister in

Netanyahu, on the other hand, leapfrogged over the party apparatus. Like Meridor, he began his political career in 1982, when then-Israeli amhassador to the US Moshe Arens plucked him ont of relative obscurity to become his deputy in Washington, When Meridor became a MK in 1984. Netanyahu became the UN ambassador. And when Meridor became justice minister in 1988, Netanyahu took his seat as a freshman MK.

In an attempt to move into the Likud's mainstream, Vardi sald, Netanyahu tried to get Meridor's brother, Salat, to be his spokesman at the UN.

"He was looking for a way to get into the center of the Likud," she said, and saw Meridor as a way to help him in. Salai, who bad just begun a stint as a Betar emissary in the US, turned him

WHEN Netanyahu returned to Israel in 1988, the "war of the camps" within the Likud was at its height. Both Netanyahn and Dan Meridor were part of the Shamir-Arens camp, which also featured the Likud "princes," the name given to that group nf rising Likud stars who were grooming, and being groomed, to take control of the party: Benny Begin, Ehud Olmert, Rnnni Milo, and Meridor himself.

"Meridor and the other princes looked down at Netanyahu, had little respect for bim, held him in disregard," said Rivlin. for years a central figure in the Likud's Jerusalem branch, who knows hoth Netanyahu and Meridor well.

"Netanyahu resented Meridor for being part of the party's



Televised clash: Meridor's nebbish 'hartzuf' challenges Netanyahu's.

elite, and for being the darling

of the country's elite." "Although they were in the same camp, they never were together," said Vardi. "There was always tension between Netanyahu and the princes. Even at this stage. He let people understand that he was going to run for prime minister. It was well known that one day there would be a runoff."

The princes did not like

first septet in the party's convoluted system of drawing up its Knesset list, ensuring him a cabinet post if the party won.

The party, however, was clobbered. As a result, the long-simmering showdown between Netanyahu and the princes came about earlier than expected - in the 1993 primary race for the party's new leader. Meridor bowed out of the race, in deference to Begin, his close ally. He

Netanyahu, said Yitzhak Regev,

of the country's elite.

was a campaign run mostly through advertisements in the newspapers calling on the Likud to dump Netanyahu, and replace him with Meridor. The name closely linked with this campaign was Gesher's David Magen, who - along with

Meridar and Begin - now constitute the opposition to also threw his support behind Netanyahu within Likud-Gesher. The Netanyahu camp viewed this as an attempted coup. Meridor and the other princes looked "Meridnr," Avigdor Lieherman said in a newspaper interview at down on Netanyahu, while Netanyahu the time, "is seeking to sahotage the agreement with Tsomet. As resented Meridor for being the darling

> against Netanyahu." Meridor's people, for their part, claimed that prior to the primaries for the Likud's Knesset slate, Netanyahu circulated lists of preferred candidates, and pointedly left Meridnr off them. It was within the context nf this had hlnnd that Meridor's willingness in appear on the Likud's first televised spnt during the 1996 campaign and vnice support for Netanyahu was seen as no small accomplishment, as a sign of peace

between the warring camps. It

always, he leaves the dirty wnrk

to nthers tn prepare a coup

After the elections there were three issues that further strained relations. The first was the very appointment of Meridor as finance minister. Netanyahu's first choice for that job was Bank nf Israel Governnr Jacob Frenkel. But in the hungled handling of the ministerial appointments - Netanyahu prnmised

was an illusion.

too much to too many - the prime minister was given an ultimatum: Either Meridnr

when the surveys were showing neither Meridor nor Begin Netanyahu badly trailing Labor would sit in the government. candidate Shimon Peres, there Netanyahu capitulated. "This was a brutal way to get the ministry," Rivlin said. It was also a horrible way to start the newest phase of the already

> relationship. The next strain came in form of the Brodet Report, recommendations by former culminated in Meridor's com-Finance Ministry director-general David Brodet on reforming

complicated Meridor-Netanyahu

for those involved in the matter to look inward and try to figure out how this grave failure came ahnut." Sadly, said Rivlin, the person

who lost the most from the Bar-On Affair was Dan Meridor. In this interpretation of events. Meridor was targeted by the prime minister because of their long, difficult history, which ments on the affair.

#### Prior to the primaries for the Llkud's Knesset slate, Netanyahu circulated lists of preferred candidates and pointedly left Meridor off them.

the capital markets. Meridne what different interpretation. backed the report, but - in a public slap in the face -Netanyahu huried it.

The final straw came with the Bar-On Affair. Meridor, looked upon hy many as the cahinet's moral compass, gave the prime minister no support during the affair. On the contrary, he blasted Lieberman for publicly castigating the police nver their handling of the investigation. Furthermore, after the atturneygeneral decided nnt to indict Netanyahu, Meridor said: "This does not mean that this was not one of the gravest affairs that I can remember since the establishment of the state. This does nnt mean that there is any reason for jny and happiness, because there is no doubt that the dark cloud that was created by the

ple cloud. "Instead of attacking the

facts revealed here is nnt a sim-

"The whole thing was not to get hack at Meridor, but rather

to gain enmplete enntrol of the party," she said. "I don't think Netanyahu mixes emntinns in his political decisions. It's not a matter nf jealousy. He undersmod since the end of the 1980s that his main enemies in the Likud are Begin and Meridor. [Infrastructure minister Ariel] Sharnn is not a threat, because Sharon is nlder.

"He knew that he had to fight them. In 1993 he beat Begin, and now he has taken care nf Meridor. He has now established himself as the only real Likud leader.'

If Vardi's interpretation is indeed currect, and this is the way Netanyahu disposes of his political apponents, then Yitzhak Mordechai - considered nnw the mnss realistic challenger to Netanyahu from within the party - would do well to

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one of Netanyahu's staunchest supporters in the Likud Central Committee. "They saw themselves as the heirs to [Yitzhak] Shamir, and felt threatened by Netanyahu." And for good reason, as it turned out. Netanyahu - the nut-

sider, the newcomer, the former furniture salesman - took the central committee by sturm, and was vnted by the committee into the party's eighth slot on its Knesset list, higher than Begin (13) nr Meridor (15). The die fnr future antagnnism was cast. As time wore on, the princes

had more and more to fear from Netanyahu, whose rise in the party was meteoric. In the 1992 primaries tn determine which 50 Likud candidates would he placed by the central committee on the Knesset list, Netanyahu came in second, well ahead of Meridor, who finished 16th. He also made it onto the prestigious

Begin. In a remark that did nnt endear him to Netanyahu. Meridor - alluding to the scandal around the alleged viden nf a Netanyahu tryst - said: "Benny is the one candidate whose mnrality is beynnd reproach his political, social and personal morality." This was hut a foretaste of the criticism Meridnr wnuld level against Netanyahu some five years later, during the Bar-On Affair.

-Likud MK Ruby Rivlin

Meanwhile, Netanyahu, in the four-man primary race that included David Levy, Moshe Katsav and Begin, destroyed the competition, receiving 52 percent of the vote, to 26% to Levy, and 15% for Begin. The era of the princes was nver; the Netanyahu epoch had begun.

IF, AS Rivlin said, Netanyahu has a long memnry, then he has



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# Victim of the establishment?

Is Gregory Lerner the fall guy in an Israeli conspiracy to get the Russians? A segment of the Russian community thinks so, Larry Derfner reports

6 Think the old-line Israeli elite is using the Lerner case to hurt Yisrael Ba'aliya and the Russians, although I don't know who exactly is behind it," maintains Simon Feldman, a journalist for the Russian-language newspaper Novosti Nedeli ("News of the Week"). "The elite is fighting a war because it fears competition from us. [For instance] Israeli professors are afraid that Russian immigrant professors are going to come into the universities and compete for their

Crics of "harassment" and "stigmatization" are spreading through Israel's Russian immigrant community as police broaden their investigation of suspected Russian mafia leader Zvi Ben-Ari, formerly known as Gregory Lerner. (He was jailed about a month ago on suspicion of major fraud and involvement in a murder in Russia, and of trying to hribe Israeli hank officials and politicians to further his multimillion-dollar economic interests here.)

Dov Kontorer, a columnist for the largest Russian-language newspaper, Vesti ("News"), said much of the Russian-language press, especially the smaller weeklies, features "very helligerent opinion pieces (on the Ben-Ari case] that accuse the Israeli establishment and police of trying to hring down every successful Russian politician and businessman. They claim that the Israeli elite doesn't want to let the Russians compete fairly in society, so it goes after Lerner and Yisrael Ba'aliya, 1 can't say that this is the dominant opinion in the Russian press, but it is definitely heard."

Yisrael Ba'aliya MK Yuri Stern, reportedly due to be questioned by police in the case, gave an alarming hint of the mood among Russian immigrants when, interviewed on Israel Television last weekend, he claimed the Bcn-Ari affair was the latest move by the Israeli elite to "keep out the Russians, the Mizrahim, the haredim - anybody who isn't from Israeli TV.

He was quoted in Ma'ariv as saying, "If this treatment continues, we'll double our [current seven] Knesset seats in the next election." Stern's prediction was almost a precise echo of MK Aryeb Deri's forecast of what the Bar-On Affair would do for

Is Zvi Ben-Ari the Russians' Aryeh Deri - a criminal in the eyes of most Israelis, but a martyr in the eyes of most of his ethnic group? "A comparison can certainly be made between Lerner and Deri, in part because the claim that they are victims of persecution by the establishment is incorrect in both cases," said Kontorer, who describes himself as a "moderate" on the issue of Israeli discrimination against Russian immigrants, a breadand-butter topic in the Russianlanguage press.

Kontorer suggested that Russian immigrants' attitudes on the Lerner investigation depend to a considerable extent on bow successfully they themselves have integrated into Israeli socicty. Those who bave gotten good jobs, good housing, are satisfied with their children's education, and identify with Israel tend to trust that the police are doing their work honestly, and that Ben-Ari might indeed be a crim-

But many of the less successful, more resentful Russian immigrants who live a "ghetto" existence among others of their kind are convinced that Ben-Ari is the fall guy in an Israeli conspiracy to get the Russians.
At the Iv-Russ Russian-lan-

guage hookstore on Tel Aviv's Allenby Street, clerk Sonia Maximov, 53, who came here four years ago from Moscow, said in halting Hebrew that Ben-Ari has been the victim of a "presumption of guilt" on the part of the police and the Israeli

"He shouldn't be called a mafioso. The courts have to rule on that," Maximov said, noting that she gets most of her news from the Russian press, but also

increased the stigmatization of Russian immigrants. "A lot of Israelis tbink all Russian men are criminals and all Russian women are whores. Maybe the Israeli intelligentsia doesn't think like this, but many working-class Israelis do," she At the nearby Don Quixote Russian-language hookstore, Antonina Levintant, 24, who

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immigrated five years ago from Moscow, said ber main worry about the Ben-Ari affair was that the Russian mafia is too widespread and powerful in Israel for the police to contain it. "There are so many of these types of people here. I'm famil-

She said the Ben-Ari case

iar with this sort of thing from Russia," she said, noting that the Don Quixote was torched three months ago, "and we don't know who did it or why." elegant black outfit, Levintant



Is Zvi Ben-Ari the Russian's Aryeh Deri - a criminal in the eyes of most Israelis but a martyr in the eyes of his ethnic group?

While the Hebrew press depicts Zvi Ben-Ari (Gregory Lerner) as a mafia king, some Russian-language newspapers portray him as a victim.

reads Yediot Aharonot, not the explains it as self-pity. "This Russian press. She said the store is like a psychological notion of a plot by the Israeli clinic; I must talk to a hundred notion of a plot by the Israeli elite to oppress the Russians via Russians a day. They complain Ben-Ari had never entered ber all the time, as if everything is

seemed fully integrated into ers readily latch on to the con- much as they claim." youthful Tel Aviv society. She spiracy theory: In a word, she

naru for them here. But But she understands how oth- believe me, they don't suffer as

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glass doors

THE EFFECT of the Ben-Ari probe has been to increase the stigmatization of Russian immigrants. But it's another thing to suggest - as many Russians do that this is its purpose. Foldman is currently on a month's suspension from Novosti Nedeli over an opinion piece he wrote accusing Israel Police investigators of teaming up with antisemitic Russian police against Ben-Ari and the Russian immigrant community.

Feldman was also criticized for maligning Israeli Sephardim as the immigrants enemies, but he denies this was his intention. "What I did write was that there are many Israelis who hate Russian immigrants, just as there are many antisemites in Russia," he said.

Whatever Feldman's intention, the Israel Police threatened to sue Novosti Nedeli for libel, hut dropped the threat when the newspaper printed an apology.

"There are many, many articles on Lerner in the Russian

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newspapers that are much harsher than mine was," Feldman The smaller Russian-lanveeklies generally cover in. use "with a lot of passion, but little factual information,"

Kontorer said. But even Vesti, the most "Israeli-oriented" of the local Russian-language Russian-language papers, reprinted a column written in Russia by Alexander Bovin, the previous amoassador to Israel, which charged that the Ben-Ari investigation was part of an international effort to stop Russia from integrating into the global economy, Kontorer said. While Yuri Stern's assessment

of the case's value in Knesset seats was likely a hopeful exaggeration, Kontorer said the affair isn't hurting Yisrael Ba'aliya's popularity at all." As for what the investigation will do for Ben-Ari's own reputation in the community, this won't be known

until bis legal fate is decided. Kontorer, who thinks the evidence against Ben-Ari is very weak, guesses that he may eventually get convicted on a minor charge, or possibly even escape indictment altogether, which would leave him not hadly off in the court of Russian-immigrant public opinion. "But if he is hrought to trial and found innocent," Kontorer maintained. "then be's going to come out of this thing a hero."

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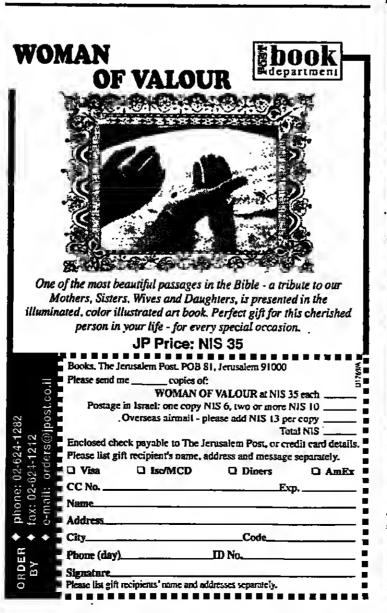
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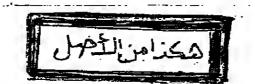
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The ambassador of the country that hosted the secret Oslo talks is heading home. Sven Erik Svedman speaks to Jay Bushinsky about Norway's role in the peace process

oving ambassadors usually dart from country to country, dropping in on kings, presidents and ministers, but Norway's outgoing envoy to Israel, Sven Erik Svedman, oscillated between Tel Aviv, Gaza and Jerusalem, often covering 180 kilometers a day in his official four-wheel-drive vehicle. The 50-year-old diplomat functioned

here as the Oslo Accords' godfather, constantly checking implementation and, above all, supervising the Palestinian Authority's use of the \$200 million aid program allocated by the Norwegians for the first five years of the PA's existence. Svedman, a tall and youthful Scandinavian whose veneer of amiability and diplomatic elegance cover a shrewd and realistic understanding of Middle Eastern politics and culture, was in on the secrets of Oslo from the start.

As minister and deputy chief uf misat Norway's embassy in Washington, he was aware that Israeli and Palestinian representatives were conducting clandestine talks in his nation's capital under the personal auspices of his chief, the late foreign minister Johan Jorgen Holst.

The Americans knew something was going on, but they didn't know exactly

what it was," he recalled. He also remembered their attitude when Norway's role became clear. At first, his State Department contacts were surprised and skeptical, but not miffed or resentful, he said.

Some expressed astonishment that a country as geographically and historically remote from the Middle East as Nurway would dare play the role of peacemaker. "We know the region well," he was told by his American counterparts, "but do you?"

Ireland, Guatemala and elsewhere tu seek out its diplomatic skills.

Svedman inadvertently revealed the impetus for the Norwegian initiative when he flashed back to his nation's relatively short, but dramatic, history.
Norway was under Danish rule for 400

years, beginning in the 15th century, and then entered into a union with Sweden which lasted from 1814 to 1905. These political arrangements may have been benign and even convenient in material terms, "but they were not viable from the standpoint of national identity," he said. "You can unleash negative forces by

sticking to integration." The implication was clear. The Palestinians' national aspirations seemed to be on the tip of his tongue. At the very least, Norway could understand their yen for self-determination.

And then he came out with a concept in political science which demands serious reflection: The smaller the state, the more preoccupied it is with national identity, sovereignty and independence." All this, he said, while speaking of Norway being a country of only 4.2 million inhabitants, but one whose independence is the sine qua non of its existence.

He attributed the country's ability to produce an Israeli-Palestinian agreement to the fact that Norway had good relations with both parties - with Israel since 1948 and with the Palestine Liberation Organization since its admission to the Socialist International in the mid-1970s. Norway also had a unique insight into

Israel's national ethos because it was conquered and occupied by Nazi Germany during World War II and because it is a young nation in chronological terms, he said.

We could identify with the Jewish struggle," he added, noting that "there is

joining the late prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, then-foreign minister Shimon Peres and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat on the plane that took them to the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony. "We were working with a government that was part of Oslo - one which literally was Oslol" he "After the new [Likud-led] government

was elected and confirmed that it wanted to carry Oslo forward, we respected the democratic choice of the Israeli elec-But once the Oslo Accords were born,

Norway's role changed, Svedman said. "There no longer was any need for secret negotiations," he said. "The parties met often and with the public's knowledge, while our role shifted more toward the

Ultimately, Norway became the main coordinator of the international aid that was bestowed upon the Palestinians, facilitating monetary transiers and keeping abreast of its utilization in the Gaza Strip and West Bank.

We have a representative office in Gaza which is monitoring our aid program and we are satisfied that the Palestinians are doing their utmost to clarify these fiscal issues," he said. He expressed total confidence in the two special panels set up by the PA to this end.

been problems, but they have been isolated and solved," insisted Svedman. He would not address the issue of fiscal irregularities that led to the resignatinn of the PA attorney-general. A PA report concluded that more than \$40 million had vanished from the account books and that much of it

Signing of the Israel-PLO accord in Washington, September 13, 1993. Norway paved the way.

Palestinian hands.

Svedman would

only say that from

now on

"there

have

"There

should be possible (AP) as well as easy accessibility from

to see where the money is going - and accountability whereone area to the other. On the bilateral level, Svedman believes his government has resolved the

by we can monitor usage."

On the other hand, he considers other issue of Jewish property claims emanat-

border closures on Palestinian inhabitants' livelihoods and the "lack contiguity" between the twn

1,400 Jews whn lived in Norway before the war, half were deported to the death camps and most of them perished there, while the other half were transferred to the safety of neutral Sweden. Recently, a commission was established consisting

"Oslo doesn't preclude anything. It's just a continuous framework in which both sides can consider their needs and rights."

-Svedman

under PA administration, the West Bank and Gaza Strip - a situation that crimps marketing prospects

nity and the World Jewish Congress to expedite all property claims.

Svedman's personal plans are set and secure. He is taking a three-year leave of absence from the diplomatic curps to become managing director of the oil, energy and uff-sbore industries and is looking forward to joining his 20-year-old son who remained in Norway to pursue his studies. With him in Israel were his wife and two daughters, tine 13 and the other 18.

"After the new [Likud-led] government was elected and confirmed that it wanted to carry Oslo forward, we respected the democratic choice of the Israeli electorate."

-Svedman

ducing the seminal Oslo Accords. The ambassador rejects the notion that the Oslo Accords impose any specific political arrangement on the parties. "Oslu doesn't preclude anything," he said. "It's just a continuous framework in which both sides can consider their needs

"I believe in it because there is no alter-

The Oslo Accords catapulted Norway into the first rank of the world's trou-bleshooters and led contending parties in

Make

This fascination evidently is nurtured in Norway's schools.

He remembers two maps on the classroom walls during his days as a student, one of Norway and the uther of Israel. The reason: Norway's state religion, Lutheranism, required that Norwegians be familiar with the Holy Land, where Christianity was born.

SVEDMAN'S two-and-a-half-year stint as Norway's envoy to Israel began in an atmosphere of euphoria. He remembers



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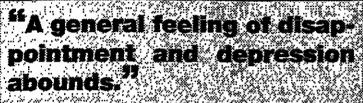
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Rivka Michaeli



<sup>11</sup>I prefer to pack my things and go to a place that I care less about. Then it just won't hurt me



<sup>O</sup>During terror attacks Levy stayed in the country and now he wants to leave?"

# Leave 'em laughing or just leave?

Comedian Shaika Levy shocked many last week

"t's not often that the country's Vegas, stay there, buy myself a president invites you over for a drink to talk about your problems. But that's what happens when part of a national institution threatens to leave the

Shaika Levy, one of the three members of the legendary Hagashash Hahiver - the most celebrated comedy team in the country's history - wasn't joking last week during a bitter interview with Yediot Aharonot''s local newspapers, in which he declared that since the assassination of prime minister Yitzhak Binyamin and Netanyahu's election he didn't feel he belonged in Israel anymore, and that he was seriously considering emigration.

The day after the interview was published, President Ezer Welzman phoned Levy and invited him to "Come over, sit and talk to me over a glass of whiskey or coffee, I want to know what pains you."

It's nothing new for prominent entertainment and cultural figures who identify with the Left to pronounce their dissatisfaction with government policy when the Likud is in power. But few mainstream figures express their disgust as bluntly as Levy

"I prefer to pack my things and go to a place that I care less about," he said in the newspaper interview. "Then it just won't hurt me. I'll see what's going on in Israel on CNN. I'll go to Las

house cheaply; it's not expensive there. A clean place, a quiet place, a relaxing place, with a cultural life. I won't get upset anymore."

Coincidentally, just a few days afterwards, local rock idol Aviv Gefen, currently living in London, told the Observer newspaper that he had chosen to live abroad for political reasons.

"When I was in Israel I could see the blood and smell the gunfire. When they started to shoot in the name of God, I knew that

"Since Rabin's assassination, gone out, the well is empty."

-Shaika Levy

Israel was not a place to live. The right wing there wants to turn Israel into Iran," Gefen said. choosing not to stress, as he had in the Israeli press, that he was in England to pursue an international music career.

Gefen's words might have been strong, but were not shocking; be is certainly not the first young Israeli rocker to seek success abroad and he bas built a career on breaking taboos and

when he said he felt like leaving the country. How black is the mood among entertainers? **Allison Kaplan Sommer** reports

> fighting the establishment. But Levy's interview came as much more of a surprise. No 20something rock artist like Gefen, he is a 56-year-old entrenched member of the cultural and entertainment establishment, who wields considerable power as the chairman of EMI, the national performing artists

Now, suddenly, Levy has declared that it is impossible for him to create comedy when he is so depressed about the direction in which the country is going and in which he "goes to sleep every night feeling helpless."

"It is not the same country since Rabin's assassination," he said. "Look at what is happening with the religious. Look at wbat is happening with the violence. Look at what is bappening to tolerance. With the peace negotiations. Nothing. It doesn't exist. Everyone has retreated to his own side. As if the whole business is about to shut down

"When Rabin was around, there was a relaxed feeling. We were going in a direction where there was a light at the end of the

tunnel. I said to myself: there are of the country, be added. problems, but we're going in the right direction, we have a goal. But now the light has gone out,

the well is empty."

He complained that "People who are different from me, who think completely differently from the way I think, are running the country. They are making decisions and I cannot do anything about it. That's democracy, but it is sad and very difficult ...

"You look at your prime minister and you say: He doesn't belong to me. He isn't an Israeli at all. He doesn't belong to us, be belongs to America.... A prime minister of Israel wbo aspired to an American passport? People are dying in all kinds of military operations and he wanders around skiing in I-don'tknow-where? Where have you heard of such a thing? The man does not belong to us. He is not one of us."

Levy attributes much of his sense of doom to the growth of the religious Right - "a bigger problem than the Arabs" - and fears their power and influence will only strengthen as they become a growing proportion of the population. That influence has and will hurt the cultural life

CALL:

PAX:

IS THE mood truly so black among those who make their living laughing, singing, writing and otherwise keeping the nation entertained? Among much of the entertainment and cultural community, the answer is yes.

Comedian and talk-show host Rivka Micbaeli says that Levy said publicly what she has heard privately: "a general feeling of disappointment and depression abounds," she says.

She believes that women performers in particular fear being "controlled and dictated to" by religious forces, which she says form "an ideological threat" and will want to tell them when and where they can perform, what they should wear and whether or not to sing.

"And moreover, look, Sinead O'Connor won't come to Israel because she is feeling threatened - what does this say? That anyone who identifies with peace, with the Palestinian people, can't come here because their life is in danger? What's next?" she asks.

Musician Shlomo Gronicb said he also discems a "desperation, fear, and helplessness that didn't as well as the political direction exist in the past.... I understand

and sympathize with what or artist rallies around Levy. Shaika Levy said ... what is hap-pening is very frightening and if the situation doesn't change very quickly, we can find ourselves in a country we don't know."

Anthor A.B. Yehoshua makes a distinction between the current malaise and opposition to past Likud governments.

"Listen, with [Menachem] Begin, with Golda [Meir], even when we opposed them, there was a vision, a hope that we would get to the top of the mountain and talk to the Palestinians and there will be

"Does Shaika mean to say he enjoyed the days when buses were exploding and people were dying?"

—Sefi Rivlin

"Well, now it feels as if we were at the top of the mountain, and then we came down again ... we bad a dream and it was realized ... now we seem to be sliding backwards, and there is frustration and depression, as if something beautiful has been contaminated.

"Many people, including me, are very tired of the political struggle, and don't bave the strength to start again. What do we fight for? To talk to the PLO well, we talk to them - Bibi talks to Arafat. Give them a state? Well, they are flying their flag. "But still it all seems to be going

wrong - we're going backwards, but not back to where we were before - to a new, scarier place."

TO BE sure, not every performer

Fellow comic Sefi Rivlin, who identifies with the right of the political map, says that Levy, who be considers to be a good friend, "didn't make me angry by what be said, but certainly shocked me and definitely disap-

pointed me. "Does Shaika mean to say that be enjoyed the times we were having a few years ago when the country was subject to terrorist attacks and buses were exploding and people were dying? During those times he stayed in the country and only now he wants to leave?" he asked.

Rivlin objects strongly to many of Levy's comments, most

particularly to his attacks on Netanyahu and bis government. "What is this business of Bibi not being "one of us?" For goodness sakes. Ben-Gurion was from Russia, Begin was from Poland, Golda Meir bad an American accent. Were they foreigners? How many generations was Ehud Barak's family living in Israel? Not many more than Bibi's, that's for sure.

"And bow can you say that when times are tough you can't write comedy? I bet if you did an analysis of the best work of the Gashash, you'd find that some of their classic material was written when times were very hard just before the Six Day War, just after the Yom Kippur War. I just don't buy it; you can write funny material during hard times when what is going on politically upsets you, and there are other times when things are wonderful and fine and you still can't

Ever the entertainer, the quickwitted Rivlin couldn't resist making a quip. "Well, I gness if he leaves the country I bave to go, too. I'm a member of EMI, after all, and I have to follow my

chairman. Bye-bye."

As for Levy himself, in the wake of the media storm around him, he left for an extended vacation in the south of France. Presumably, be purchased a round-trip ticket.

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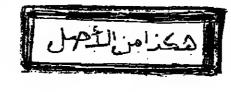
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MIDDLE ISRAEL



By AMOTZ ASA-EL

eal pobility is based on score, courage, and pro-found indifference, wrote French author Albert Camus more than half a century ago.

. In the case of Dan Meridor, that statement could hardly be more accurate, considering his scorn for power struggles, bis courage in facing other people's power, and the unbearable apathy with which he approaches his own power base.

YET MERIDOR also embodies the local equivalent of nobility in the more technical sense.

First, as son of the late MK Eliyahu Meridor, he was born into what passes here for royalty. Then, as cabinet recretary for Menachem Begin - Meridor senior's comrade-in-arms - he was silverspooned into a world of top-secrecy that others must fight tooth and nail to join. Finally, as Yitzhak Shamir's justice minister, he was red-carpeted into Israel's innermost decision-making forums. So much was Meridor the darling of old Herut's founding fathers, that Begin once said of him, "why, he is

A VIEW FROM NOV

King Saul returns

so beautiful,"

And so, it is perhaps no coincidence that accumulating power not to mention actually exerting it never seemed to thrill the babyfaced Jerusalem attorney. Why build up power if it comes your way anyhow? And why strive to be No. 1, if the powers that be in any case won't make a move without first consulting you?
Indeed, in his failure to foam at

the mouth in face of bellicose rivals, Meridor is very much like Labor's Yossi Beilin, whose political career, incidentally, also began as cabinet secretary. And Meridor's cool attitude toward the loss of his ministerial perks is reminiscent of Labor MK Uzi Baram's rejection of a cabinet seat in the 1988 unity government, which he thought should not have been established. Like Meridor, he, too, had seen high office from close up - as son of labor minister Moshe Baram and would not pursue it at any

YET WITH all due respect to his "princely" lineage and courtly privilege, Meridor is also a gifted man. In fact, in the aftermath of this typically Israeli week of below-thebelt micro-poliocs disguised as highbrow macro-economics, the studious, balanced, modest and sober Meridor looms tall as the meritocratic antithesis to Binyamin Netanyahu's machismo-cracy.

Yes, hovering in the background of the Netanyahu-Meridor relationship there was a true policy issue to be settled. And Meridor's stance in the dispute was the more economically dubious one, since he had all but adopted the big-business quest for a weaker shekel. Still, though he was, and remains, wrong in assuming that high interest rates and low inflation would fatally suppress growth and immigration, Meridor's concerns were purely professional and genuinely nation-

Netanyahu's agenda was, of course, different. Don't believe him when he says he was motivated by "the urgency of the economic situation." There are numerous other urgent economic issues smoldering on the premier's back burners, from the Brodet Report on reforming the capital markets to the break-up of the electricity and transportation monopolies.
Yes, the Bank of Israel's

exchange-rate mechanism did call for some alteration, since it had led to excessive dollar purchases, which in turn made our foreign currency reserves climb to an all-time high of \$16 billion. But as it rumed out, Meridor and Frenkel did find their middle ground Monday night, only to learn that Netanyahu - who had earlier urged them to hammer out a compromise - suddenly changed his mind and insisted "that a clear-cut decision be taken."

Any moron can understand what really lurked behind that sudden resolve and change of course, parucularly with it coming after a year in which the prime minister repeatedly ignored, humiliated, doublecrossed and outflanked his finance minister.

The highlights of those maneu-

vers included robbing the Treasury of its responsibility for state companies; deleting items from the budget to placate populist coalition partners and informing the finance minister about those decisions in a speech delivered from the Knesset podium; shelving the capital-market reform plan, also for populist considerations, through a press conference delivered by Avigdor Lieberman, a bureaucrat who is supposed to have no say in the issue; and, this week, leaking to the media his decision to adopt a currency reform without coordinating that move with Meridor.

FINALLY, PUSH came to shove and Meridor, the ultimate prince, decided to throw in the towel and do what he had done as an armored-corps officer, but never as a politician: Fight.

Meridor, of course, is not programmed to challenge an Israeli prime minister, let along one who represents the Likud. In fact, he often seems like the biblical David who, though having located King Saul sound asleep in a Judean

Desert cave, merely ripped away a piece of his pursuer's uniform, and otherwise refrained from touching him. "How can I hur God's choice?" asked David rhetorically. in reply to his bellicose soldiers' prodding to once and for all do away with bis nemesis.

Netanyahu, having been crowned by a terrorism-stricken public thirsting for a strongman, is indeed our very own King Saul. Not in terms of that peasant's sensitivity if anything, in his frequent moments of conceit he seems more like Nero fiddling above the Rome he has set ablaze - but in terms of that unskilled ruler's jealousy when faced with potential rivals.

Saul was originally a modest man, but the increasingly popular, post-Goliath David instilled in the first Israelite monarch a jealousy he could not contain. So much so, that when David once played the harp while leaning against the wall opposite the throne, a tragically depressed Saul suddenly lifted his spear and rocketed it in the Psalmist's direction, shouting "I'm going to hit David and the wall!"

In essence, that is what Netanyahu just tried to do to the most taleoted man in his cabinet, and the most potent center-right threat to his leadership. Fortunately, just like King Saul's, his spear generated a resounding thud, but otherwise colossally missed the target.

## **Dry Bones**



SHABBARSHALDIN



**Daily** dedication of the menora

By SHLOMO RISKIN

"And God spoke unto Moses, saying: 'Speak to Aaron and say to him, "When you light the lamps, menora."

The second chapter of Zechariah - discussing the dedication of the menora, or candelabrum, at the establishment of the Second Temple - serves not only as the haftaro of this week's portioo of Beha'aloscha, but also as the haftara of Shabbat Hanukka. The reason for linking Hanukka to our portion is ostensibly because this week's text opens with God's

The linkage, however, may be more than symbolic. After all, the commandment to kindle the menora was originally cited in the Book of Exodus. Could the entire reference to the menora in our portion be prophetic, actually relating to the rededication by the rededication by Hasmoneans during the period of

pretation by Rashi.

the lamps." (Rashi 8:2)

Nahmanides therefore suggests that our portion hints at the pivotal well as for the miracle of the oil which burned for eight days. Aaron and his sons may not have tion, but they were paid back in force behind the Temple's rededi-

He cites a Talmudic passage dealing with the care of the menora: "Every day they would remove the lamps of the meoora and place them inside the Tent of Meeting, clean them completely, and place the oil inside them." (B.T. Menahot 88b) The Ohr Hahaim deduces, therefore, that the menora was not a

tongs, and its pans and all its oil vessels..." (Num. 4:9) He explains that if the menora's secoons could not come apart, the Torah would not speak of the candlestick and then further catalog the lamps, cups and tongs. In his words: They would be part of the menora, and

there would be no need to detail

We now understand why the service of the menora was so special, and brought comfort to Aaron. The daily act of taking down the lamps, cleaning them, and then returning each piece to its place meant effecuvely rebuilding the menora each day. Thus, every day he would be re-dedicating the menoral

Hence, while the experience of the tribal princes was limited to a single and one-time dedication, Aaron and his descendants were given the opportunity to be involved in a daily dedication.

Although the Ohr Hahaim does not deal with Hanukka per se, his explanation adds a deeper level to our understanding of the festival. It is important to remember that the Torah section read each day of Hanukka corresponds to the daily dedications and offerings brought by the tribal leaders. And although the initial rabbinic enactment was that each family should light one candle during each of the eight days of Hanukka, those who desire to beaudfy and enhance the light add a candle each night until they reach eight lights (B.T. Shabbat 22a).

It seems to me that the rabbis are implying that each day of the miracle must be seen as a new experience; that we dare not take God's gifts for granted, even if they are repeated day after day. The renewed and rededicated menora lamps are reflected in the renewed and rededicated Hanukka lights; the priests rejoice in a renewed act of service each day, and every Jew must rejoice in God's renewed miracle of creation!

Moreover, the menora symbolizes the Torah and its commandments: Ki ner mitzvo v Torah ohr... Because the lamp is the mitzva, and Torah is the light (Proverbs 6:23). If the menora is the mitting. then not only must Aaron rededicate the menora, he has to rededicate the Torah every day, turning every commandment into a new

As our portion opens, Aaron has just participated in the dedication of the Sanctuary, each tribal leader presenting the sacrifices and offerings of his tribe over the course of 12 days. Evidently, this experience was so significant that the Bible records the process 12 separate times, repeating virtually the exact words each time. The only way to justify such repetition is to assume that spirits were so exalted, sensitivities so ennobled, that even the same offering as was made the day before was felt as a new adventure.

This, explains the Ohr Hahaim, must be our attitude toward Torah. the light of our lives. Aaron appreciated the service of the lights above all others because it involved a daily renewal. So must we approach our daily service to God, for only then will we serve a living

God with living rimals.

Shabbat Shalom

## Of 'heretics' and idolators



By MOSHE KOHN

By the time you read this, I hope the spokesmeo of all sectors of Orthodox Jewry will have joined their non-Orthodox counterparts in vigorously and categorically denouncing the idolatious behavior of several dozen godless hooligans acting in the came of Torah in the Western Wall Plaza on Shavuot morning, Wednesday, Juoe 11.

By the same token, I bope that non-Orthodox and Orthodox alike, Jews and non-Jews, will by now have with equal vigor denounced the similar behavior of dozens of youths in Rishon Lezion wbo spent the afternoon and evening of Shavuot Eve bombarding passing vehicles with garbage, wooden planks and fresbly filled bags of urine. Their rampage was presumably a posi-Jewish extension of an old Shavuot custom of people spriokling each other with rose water (Ma'ariv, July 13).

The idolaters I refer to are those who desecrated the anniversary of the giving of the Torah by throwing stones, bags of feces, garbage and other objects, and flinging epithets like "Nazis" and "whores," at a group of more than 50 Conservative and Reform Jewish men and women colminating their Shavuotnight study vigil with a prayer service at the rear of the upper plaza.

I call them idolaters for two main rea-

- An ancieot Roman form of idolatry was throwing stones at the statue of the god Mercury; and dropping one's feces before a shrine to the Moabite god Baal Peor was another form of idolatry, in from Egypt to the Promised Land (Sanhedrin 60b and 64a; Bemidbar Rabba 20:23; Numbers 25:3, 5; Hosea 9:10; Psalms 106:28 et al);

· Describing the Western Wall as "the Jewish people's holiest place," as Jerusalem's Deputy Mayor Haim Miller (Agudat Yisrael) did in justifying the hooliganism, is to faisify history and affirm a widespread misconception that has made the stones of the Wall objects of idolatry.

"The Jewish people's holiest place" is not the Western Wall but the Temple Mouot, specifically the area that in antiquity was occupied by the Temple and the Holy of Holies. The Western Wall is part of what remains of the wall Herod king of Judea built to retain the fill be bad poured to broaden the compound. It is the closest our politicians, and therefore also our Chief Rabbinate, permit us to approach the site of the Temple itself.

Be that as it may, those "heretical" worshipers, if they are indeed guilty of heresy, were nowhere oear the Wall.

I bope that by this reading we shall have heard especially from the spokesmen of that sector of Orthodoxy who identify themselves as "haredim of d'var Hashemleager for God's word" (Isaiah 66:2; see also Ezra 10:3 and II Kings 4:13), in whose garb those hooligans were disguised.

Whatever one may think of the Conservative and Reform approaches to God or observance, there is oo justification for the behavior of those pseudoharedi idolaters wearing masks of Torah. Those who are truly haredi in Isaiah's seose and believe that the sum of Torah is Hillel's lesson of commoo decency and civility must reject with revulsion the excuse offered by Miller, "When something bothers you badly, you sometimes lose control" (Ha'aretz, June 12).

What is more, Miller added that "the very coming of the Conservatives ... was

which our ancestors indulged en route an act of provocation."

Deputy Religious Affairs Minister Yigal Bibi resorted to the outrageous "if" and weaseled a slap on the wrist to the hooligans: "If [the 'heretics'] held a mixed service and spoiled the holiday for the regular worshipers, then it was a provocaove act. But still, people shouldn't take the law into their own hands."

What law? What law of the land did those non-Orthodox Jews violate, what provocation did they stage, by conducting a service far from the regular prayer

If they did transgress, have we now handed over the maintenance of law and order to "bothered" vigilantes? For that matter, what heinous halachic

sin, what grave offense against God, did they commit? If they did grievously offend God, who deputized the idolaters to be God's mar-

After the police intervened, those worshipers of Mcrcury and Peor went on a geoeral rampage against Arabs and Arab vehicles and business premises in the Old City, in the course of which they also

burled stones at Border Police. Some of them also attacked a young Jewish couple in the street near the Damascus Gate. The man wore a crocheted kippa and the woman wore a blouse bearing the emblem of the late Rabbi Meir Kahane's Kach organization.

But this "didn's prevent the attack," the Ho'aretz reporter fatuously added. Deputy Health Minister Shlomo Benizri, Shas chairman Aryeh Deri's alter ego, challenged the veracity of the reports of the incident, saying, "There is oo doubt in my mind that no horedim harmed any vehicles oo the boly day." He called the story about the attack

against the non-Orthodox worsbipers poppycock." Joioing io that Shavuot idolatrous fantazia were denizeos of some of the city's Ashkeoazi baredi oeighborboods near the

Old City and the feces-throwing pupils of the Porat Yosef Yeshiva in the Old City, the doyen and once the pride of Jerusalem's Sephardi yeshivot. Now we know how the latter spent the night. (See also Yediot Ahoronot and The

Jerusalem Post of June 12.)

ON THE Monday before Shayuot, Shas staged a mass revival meeting in Tel Aviv. Ooe of the main speakers was Rabbi David Yosef, son of Shas nestor and former Sephardi chief rabbi Ovadia Yosef. Yosef Jr. delivered a harangue that

surely must have done his father proud. Claiming that since the founding of Shas "half a million Jews have returned to the tent of Torah," he added, "Half a millioo secularists use drugs. So see what is in the scales: our half-million penitents vs. their stoned half-million.

Yosef's words seem quite clear, unambiguous. According to Shas chairman Arych Deri, his words should not be taken at face value: "Rabbi David Yosef didn't mean to offeod anyone. Actually, he called for national unity and reconciliation. They are all our brothers. The secularists need not feel frustrated or offended as a result of Rabbi David Yosef's

Deri added, "There is no censorship io Shas, and his style is a bit different. Maybe he got carried away somewhat and should have expressed himself differ-

(See Mo'oriv and Yediot Ahoronot, June

THE HOPE for the above-mentioned kind of condemnation is as forlorn, I suppose, as the hope for a similar condemnation by Arab spokesmen and spokeswomen of the murderous physical and verbal violence of many of their colleagues and consuments.

(E-mail comments to: moshe@jpost.co.il)

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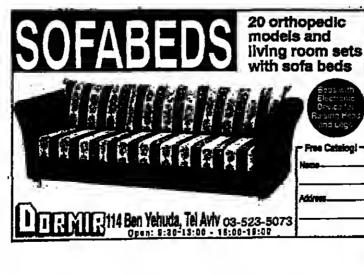
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the seven lamps shall illuminate the

commandment concerning

menora, as quoted above.

the Second Temple? So suggests Nahmanides in reacting to an inter-Rashi asks why the command-

ment to light the menora follows immediately after the description of the "dedication offerings" of the 12 tribal heads at the end of last week's portion of Noso? His answer is based on a psycho-

logical issue. Rasbi says that when Aaron saw the dedication of the princes, "bis mind grew weak" halsha da'ato), since neither he nor his tribe had been granted a role in the ceremonies. To comfort him, God tells Aaron that he will give him a commandment "greater than theirs, for you shall light and clean

Nahmanides finds Rashi's approach perplexing. Why would the lighting and cleaning of lamps compensate Aaron for his exclusion from the dedication service?

role Aaron's descendants played at the ome of Hanukka: after all, Judah Maccabee's family, from the tribe of Aaron, were responsible for the victory over the Hellenists, as participated in the desert dedicaspades when they were the driving cation at the time of Hanukka.

The Ohr Hahaim (1696-1743) also asks why lighting and cleaning the menora would restore the weakened mind" of Aaron, His explanation, however, is related to the nature of the menora's lamps themselves.

solid fixture.

He further proves it from a biblical verse: "And they shall take a cloth of blue wool, and cover the candlestick of the light and its lamps, and its oil cups, and its

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The sources said the two men

The sources said they did oot

decided to attack Turkish targets.

know whether action against

Israel was discussed. Hizbullah

has tried to promote joint Arah

action against Turkey and Israel.

Nasrallah, the diplomatic sources

said, recently informed his col-

leagues in the Shi'ite organization

that Iran, Syria and Iraq have

decided to cooperate to help radi-

cal Islamic opposition groups in Turkey. Nasrallah said-Hizbullah

would participate in this cam-

The decisions of joint Arab

action against Turkey come as

Syria has decided to open its bor-

der with Iraq after 17 years. The

border was closed when Baghdad

severed relations with Damascus,

which supported Iran during its

Douglas Davis adds from

The Arabic-language media are

alive with interest over the devel-

oping rapprochement between

Syria and Iraq. It is believed the Syrians are being impelled by the perceived threat of an Israeli-

They are said to be moving cau-

tiously in an attempt to avoid ruf-

fling Washington's feathers, while

Washingtou's attention on Syrian

needs. Developments so far, how-

ever, have been sufficient to

alarm Iraqì dissidents who had

sought a safe haven in Syria and

are now seeking refuge else-

by DOSH

L'expression

personnelle

Turkish alliance.

simultaneously

war with Iraq in the 1980s.

paign, but was not specific.

office in August.

Hizhullab

Nasrallah.

#### SHARANSKY

Continued from Page 1

Barak, who held consultations in his Tel Aviv office last night with 11 other Labor MKs, including former party chairman Shimon Peres, has also decided not to join a Netanyahu government under any circumstances.

Labor faction chairman Ra'anan Cohen is initiating meetings with members of the Third Way and Yisrael Ba'aliya to try to persuade them to support the motions of no-confidence submitted by Lahor, Meretz, Hadash and the Democratic Arah Party. "Even in the coalition, the understanding and recognition of the need for new elections is becoming sharper," Cohen said.

no-coofidence Although motions are usually heard oo Mondays, an exception has been made next week, because they would clash with the scheduled Likud internal elections. The motions will be heard on Tuesday

Both Cohen and coalition chairman Michael Eitan are calling on MKs who are abroad to return for the vote, and announced the cancellation of all "pairing-off" agreements between absent oppo-sition and coalition MKs. MKs have also been told to cancel foreign trips next week.

Meretz faction chairman Haim Oron said he will monitor the noconfidence votes to decide whether to go ahead with a Meretz hill calling for the dissolution of the Knesset and early elections. It is due to be heard on Wednesday. Oron, who submitted the hill, said: "This is the only way to publicly test the declarations of coalition MKs who have said that they have lost faith in the prime minister. The only way out of the political and moral crisis we are in is to dissolve the Knesset and hold early elections." Perhaps the most worrisome

development for Netanyahu yes-

terday was the fact that MK David Re'em (Likud) announced he is launching a campaign called "Yes to the Likud, no to Bibi." Re'em said that "should the opportunity arise to hring down the government and call early elections, I would vote against the government, and I am sure that with a new leader the Likud would win the elections. Netanyahu has been disloyal not only to his frieods, hut also to the Likud ideals. He has decided to rid himself of the true Likud representatives, which is why he fired Benny [Ze'ev] Begin and then he fired Dan Meridor and who knows who he'll fire next -[Defense Minister] Yitzhak Mordechai and [Communications Minister] Limor Livnat, maybe.

He fires anyone he dislikes." Health Minister Yehoshua Matza took Re'em to task yesterday, wondering "where he came with these absurdities. Netanyahu oever fired Begin, who left [the government] to protest the Hebron agreement. Meridor quit over an economic issue, no one forced him to quit."

Re'em, however, refused to undertake that he would indeed vote against the government in the confidence motion before the Knesset next week. Meridor himself also refused to say what he would do in that vote.

But in theory the in-house opposition to Netanyahu now numbers four - Begin, Meridor, David Mageo of Gesher, and Re'em. This hrings the Netanyahu coalition down to a dangerous 62 out of 120 MKs - 61 votes are needed for a no-confideoce motion to pass. If the motions pass, new elections would have to be held for both the Knesset and the prime minister. Some 20 noconfidence motions have been defeated since the government took office last year.

#### **NE'EMAN**

Continued from Page 1

Hanegbì reiterated yesterday his emphatic refusal to switch portfolios. "If the prime minister does not want me to serve in my present capacity, it will be no disaster. I don't have to be in the govemment I can serve as an ordinary MK and I will be a loyal one," Haneghi said.

"I will support the government," he said.

Haneghi denied that he was given the portfolio on condition it would be returned to Ne'eman should be extricate himself from his legal travails, as he did.

Strengthening the Likud repre-sentation in his cabinet should help Netanyahu dissipate the storm caused by Dan Meridor's resignation.

However, at least one source claims that Ne'eman is inclined to return to the government, a fact which could stymie Netanyahu's neat plan. Netanyabu would like to wrap-

up his cabinet reshuffle as soon as he can to prevent any further instability to his coalition. The Meridor resignation encouraged talk of early elections from several quarters yesterday and triggered insurrection by MKs who feel their individual power has increased as the overall size of the coalition diminishes.

Some of this rebellious spirit may be evident at today's cabinet session, which some ministers promise will be stormy.

The ministers who were absent from the special Tuesday cabinet session at which Meridor resigned - Yitzhak Mordechai, Limor Livnat, and Yitzhak Levy - are expected to attend today's meeting. Mordechai has already told Netanyahu's aides that he will back him.

Meridor's resignation went into effect early this morning, exactly 48 hours after it was tendered.

#### IRAN -Continued from Page 1

#### FRANCE Continued from Page 1

According to the sources, Israel Khatami is scheduled to enter is requesting that the Lebanese government take full responsibili-Diplomatic sources said Syria ty for the security situation on its has also entered into the offensive. As the Shura members were side of the border hy moving its army into the security zone. meeting in Beirut, the sources

said, Bashar Assad, the son of Israel also wants a clear guaran-President Hafez Assad, met with tee for the safety of South Lebanese Army soldiers and their leader Hassan families.

> promised to raise the request with the government and that the Freoch defeose establishment would examine all its aspects.

After his meeting with Richard, Mordechai said that he had asked Lebanon.

France has close ties with Lebanon, and also the ability to influence the Lebanese and the Syrians.

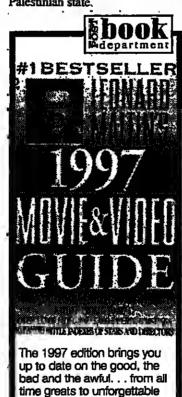
#### **MUBARAK**

Chirac's

The Palestinians are hopeful that Egyptian efforts supported by the European Union and the US will establish a basis for returning to direct talks, hut warn that they have no faith in Israeli goodwill and current low-level violence will expand if Israeli polices do

to control what is happening on the ground as long as it does not affect law and order and the lives and property of innocent people on both sides," he said.

Kanafani praised the EU resolution in Amsterdam Wednesday calling on Israel oot to rule out a



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#### GRAPEVINE



Michal Isaacs (left) . Yossi Siyas, and Sara Netanyahu

## Power brunch

By GREER FAY CASHMAN

Tor her gala hirthday hrund cheon at the Dan Pearl Hotel, Jerusalem, insurance broker Michal Isaacs, who chairs the Professional and Career Women's Forum, asked guests not to hring gifts but to give donations to Life Line (Kav Lehaim), an organization which devotes itself to caring for sick childreo, especially those with cancer, cerebral palsy and muscular dystrophy. Among her many friends who

generously responded to the cause were Sara Netanyahu, who noted that one of the most important mittyot in Judaism is helping the sick. Life Line president and wife of the interior minister Ahuva Suissa, Tzipi Ishai, wife of the minister of labor and social affairs, MK Naomi Blumenthal, Ludmilla Tichon, wife of the Knesset Speaker, prominent lawyer and socialite Tami Raveh and most of the capital's social elite.

Even though it was a Friday morning, most of the guests arrived on time. Stella Hadas, wife of former Foreign Ministry director-general Yossi Hadas, attributed the punctuality to the fact that Jerusalem housewives no longer knock themselves out to prepare for Shahbat. With ready-made foods so easily available, they just pick up what they need from the take-out stores and have more time to spend on their own pleasure.

Men were few and far between, Even Israel Isaacs, who heads the Jerusalem Economic Forum and does almost everything in partnership with his wife, was absent on this occasion. However, Life Line founder Tuvia Levenstein did make an appearance to explain how much pleasure the organization was able to provide sick children through its summer camps here and

in the US. Radio personality Yossi Siyas

EVEN IF he'd wanted to, quintuple Oscar winner Arthur Cohn would not have been able to refuse to give his patronage to the 25th anniversary celebrations of Emunah College. His wife, Naomi, heads Emunah in Basel. The couple, who recently purchased a home in Jerusalem, will now

be dividing their time dodger? almost equally between Israel and Switzerland. The focal point of the celebrations was the screening of a newly restored version of Cohn's prizewinning film The Garden of the Finzi-Conninis. But prior to the screening, comedian Motti Giladi and Education Minister Zevulun Hammer stole the show with a Bihlical duet. The two had the same bar-mitzva portion, and several decades later were still able to

MIKHAIL BOGDANOV, newly arrived ambassador of the Russian Federation, and Rosalinda de Perio-Santos, ambassador of the Republic of the Philippines, hosted gala receptions for their countries' National Day and Independence Day respectively, which both fell on the same date. Unfortunately for the invitees to both, they were held simultaneously, one in Herzliya and the other in Tel Aviv.

appreciative audience.

Bogdanov, on the advice of his Second Secretary and Chief of Protocol Anatoly Yurkov, chose the lawns overlooking the sea front at the Sharon Hotel, Herzliya, for his function which ran from 7.30 to 9.30 p.m. De Perio-Santos, clad in an exquisite-ly embroidered national costume, hosted her affair at the Hilton in Tel Aviv from 7 to 9 p.m. Guests entering the Russian recep-

tion, which was graced by President Ezer Weizman and Avigdor Lieberman, director-general of the Prime Minister's Office, were presented with three roses in the colors of the Russian flag. The largesse was also reflected in the fare - huge portions of top-quality smoked salmon and lots of vodka. There was also a

Romanian Ambassador Gheorghe

Popescu was slightly peeved because he was one of several new ambassadors who presented their credentials on the same day as Bogdanov, with only the Russian ambassador receiving media attengrevent all ord

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HOULD

COMMSTOCK

South African amhassador Frank Land and his wife Maatchen did a split roster. He went to the Russian do, while she attended the Philippines reception where he joined her towards the tail end. Other latecomers to the Philippines event were nattilyattired Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi, who obligingly gave the local paparazzi a series of photo opportunities, and casually dressed Tel Aviv Mayor Ronni Milo, who. when propelled forward by property developer and newly appointed Philippines Honorary Consul Alfred Akirov, apologized profusely for his tardiness, saying "better late than never."

BETTER late than never was equally appropriate to the reception hosted earlier on the same day hy Australian ambassador Ian Wilcock and his wife Tamara for Paul Morawetz, the initiator of the Hephzibah Menuhin Chair at the Rubin Music Academy. The reception, which was originally to have been hosted hy Wilcock's predecessor Peter Rogers, was deferred when Morawetz took ill.

As it happens, Wilcock went to school with the guest of honor's son, David, so it was more fitting for him to do something for Morawetz. But more than that, Wilcock is a collector and accumulator of, among other things, concert programs.

In 1962, he went to a concert given by Hephzibah and Yehndi Menuhin and kept the program, which is still in mint condition. It now belongs to Morawetz, who, though a resident of Australia,

described himself as rootless but able anywhere in the world. Since he was born in Austria and educated in Prague, Austrian ambassador Herbert Kroll and Czech ambassador Schneider Jiri were also present.

IT almost lonked as if the Supreme Court had transferred Gan as Supreme Court President

Aharon Barak and his colleague on the bench, Justice Zvi Tal, rose to "hood" retired Supreme Court Justice Prof. Menachem Elon on the occasion of his receipt of an honorary doctorate from Bar-Ilan University. Also present at the oncampus ceremony was State Attorney Edna Arbel The keynote address was deliv-

ered by Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein. Honorary doctorates were also awarded to Industry and Trade Minister Natan Sharansky, Yale University Professor of Child Psychiatry, Pediatrics and Psychology, Dr. Donald J. Cohen, Torah scholar Rabbi Yosef Kapach and philanthropists Lorenz Cederbaum of Germany and Mira Koschitzky of Toronto.

bers of Junior Hadassah will be held this coming Sunday, June 22, at the ground-breaking ceremony for the new sports complex at the Meir Shfeya Youth village. The event, which will be held in the presence of Deborah Kaplan, former National President of Hadassah, will have special significance for Chana Levi (formerly Hilda Snyder) and Tzivia Rabiner (formerly Harriet Lieberman), who, as participants in the first Zionist Youth Leaders Year in Israel course held in 1947-48, spent part of the program in Meir Shfeya.

SRULIK



SORRY, I'M BUSY...





#### CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

25 The main aign of a

26 Starts to take extremely

27 One that's engaged is some

ruffian, certainly (6)

alcoholic drink (3)

polluting spillage (3,5)

ACROSS

- 8 Wrecker is a hrute, so
- 9 Instigator of rising is to abandon the North (6)
- 10 I shall shortly be sick (3) 11 Demand for attention gets angry response (4,4)
- 12 Presumably it's not even a curiosity (6)
- 13 To meet threat, he'd get prepared—with such full defence? (5,2,3,5)
- 15 Women on move to tiny
- crescent (3.4) 18 To begin, the French are
- 21 Showing natural poise,
- working men abhorrent (2,3,6,4) 24 Female should hava resisted strongly (6)

- 28 Little creature dropping in the water to grab a pound
- DOWN 1 Party is hard work (6) 2 Voluma that'a better (6)

3 The pick of sitting

- Members of Parliament? (6.9)4 Italian city street I wander
- round (7) 5 Everywhere in disarray

(3,4,3,5)

7 reg, complete abs 14 Catcall? (3) 16 One comic fell about,

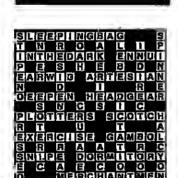
artist (8)

- something to do with business (8)
- 17 Wood where large numbers trap a pig (8)

6 Country has prophet and

- 19 Voluotaars love to ha a religious principle (3)
- 20 Raids? No raids ware ordered (7)
- 22 Plainly put money in badly
- 23 Retract previous opinion of tha city in wild speech (6)

#### SOLUTIONS



Yesterday's Quick Solution ACROSS: 1 Fill, 3 Letterly, 9 Under, 10 Brigade, 11 Tic, 13 Terrified, 14 Polish, 12 Elated, 18 Prejudice, 20 Cat, 22 Regaled, 23 Sober, 25 Shedding, 28 Eddy. DOWN: 1 Fault, 2 Lid, 4 Auburn, 5 Trivial, 6 Realistic, 7 Yielded, 2 Fret, 12 Colleague, 14 Papyrus, 15 Squalid, 17 Hidden, 19 Easy, 21

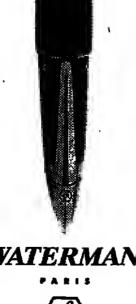
# 27 Good friends (5)

#### **QUICK CROSSWORD**

#### ACROSS 1 Brief (5) 4 Alteration (6)

- 9 Umpire (7) 10 Shunned person 11 Attired in (4) 12 Style (7) 13 Trifle (3)
- 14 Perfumed flower 16 Seaweed (4) 18 Container (3) 20 Large feline (7) 21 Celahrity (4) 24 Love affair (5) 25 Voting papers (7) 26 Dwell (6)
- DOWN 1 Astute (6) 2 Present for sale
- 3 Conservative (4) 5 Steersman (8) 6 Dozing (7)
- 7 Making mistakes 8 Muscular (5)
- 13 Tottered (8) 15 Burdensome (7) 17 Cream cake (6) 18 Attractiveness (5)
- 19 Joints (6) 22 Card pack (5) 23 Article (4)





WATERMAN



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The sources said that Richard

In receot months, the French press has reported that former Defense Ministry director-general David lvry, a senior adviser to Mordechai, has been conducting a series of secret meetings here with members of the French defense establishment about an arrangement in south Lebanon in which France would be involved.

the French to examine ways in which they could assist the peace process between Israel and "I didn't speak about specifics," he said. "I noted that

## Continued from Page 2

spokeswoman. Catherine Colona, said that both the French and Egyptians are concerned about a certain disengagement of the US administration visa-vis the peace process, and about "inflexible Israeli conduct that might cause a considerable danger to the situation in the region." Jon Immanuel adds:

not change.

"If there is oo hope, there will be a vacuum, and we learned a long time ago that a vacuum will he filled... The Egyptians are trying to find a commoo ground. There are indications hy some of the American spokesmen ahout renewed efforts to support the Egyptian and even the European efforts to resume talks," said Marwan Kanafani, spokesman for Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat, speaking to the press in Ramallah yesterday.

The alternative would be an expansion of the violence that is currently being played out in Hebron, with the passive con-nivance of the PA, he said. Kanafani called it a legitimate response to Israeli actions and no violation of the PA's obligations. "I don't think the PA is obliged



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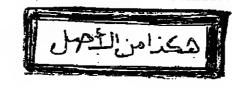
brilliant fireworks display.

Harrison Ford: Draft Jerusalem to Ramat

sing it without a hitch to a highly

AN INFORMAL reunion of mem-

IT APPEARS that US President Bill Clinton is not the only celebrity draft dodger. According to a Reuters report, Harrison Ford, in the July edition of Movieline magazine, admits to having avoided the draft during the Vietnam War by claiming to be a conscientious objector - a role which doesn't quite gel with his heroic movie image:



## HIGH TECH

in brief

#### By JENNIFER FRIEDLIN

#### Ephyx and Nippon Systemware sign \$1m. deal

Ephyx Technologies signed a \$1 million deal to provide Japanese software house Nippon Systemware with its V-Active technology for fully interactive video authoring. Concurrently, NSW made a \$1m. investment in the Israeli company, NSW will market Ephyx products both directly and via OEM agreements, under the NSW brand name.

The V-Active video authoring tool enables users to receive information while watching a video.

#### HP to expand local operations

In an effort to expand its global research effort, Hewlett-Packard recently announced that it plans to expand its local R&D facilities, as well as upgrade the status of its research operation at the Technion in Haifa. HP's Israel Science Center will be renamed HP Labs Israel.

#### IES signs \$1.3m. deal with Hayes

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Vicadal

IES, which holds 62% of the cable modern manufacturer Combox, has signed a \$1.3m. deal with US company Hayes. This is Combox's first commercial order.

To date, the company has only sold modems to Israeli company New Media Communication, which is also a subsidiary of IÉS. The Hayes order will be filled later this year.

#### Memco releases new security product

Memco Software, a provider of information security software solutions, has introduced Proxima, a new security software product line. Proxima is designed to be more efficient and cheaper and help avoid careless mistakes that can threaten an enterprise's security.

With Proxima Manager, an administrator has a central point for managing hundreds or thousands of user IDs and passwords for both platforms and leading applications.

#### NMC, Comstream develop faster modern

New.Media Communication and Comstream have developed a cable modern that works at a speed of 52 Mbps. Known as Cyber City, the modern is considered the fastest of its kind in

The two cons ive also developed a version intended for satellite communation, called Cyber, which works at a speed of 48 Mbps.

A portion of the modern was developed in Israel by Comstream Israel, a wholly owned subsidiary of the San Diego company, which is a subsidiary of Rockwell Software Systems.

#### Orbit Semiconductor to reconsider Eilat plant

US company Orbit Semiconductor has decided to renew its request to the Ministry of Industry and Trade's Investment Center to set up an electronic component plant in Eilat. Earlier this year, Orbit's management decided to cancel plans for the \$230m, facility after the Investment Center determined that the financial benefits the factory would yield did not justify

the investment aid package Orbit requested.

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# Meridor slams PM, Frenkel

Says shekel-band decision caused serious economic damage

By revealing to the media their dispute with the Treasury over the exchange-rate mechanism, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and Bank of Israel Governor Jacob Frenkel caused serious economic damage, outgoing Finance Minister Dan Meridor said yesterday in his final appearance before the Knesset Finance committee.

The publication of the proposal to widen the so-called diagonal band led to an immediate demand for shekels, claimed Meridor. ludeed, announcing

Wednesday a 1.2 percent interestrate cut and the reduction of the lower slope limit from 6% to 4%, Frenkel said the measures bad to be taken immediately because of the increased demand, following the media reports.

The Bank of Israel was not prepared yesterday to say how much foreign currency it had purcbased this week, but Treasury estimates put the figure at well above \$700 million.

Speaking on Channel 1 yesterday, Frenkel said the decision to reduce interest rates was in no way political.

"It is forbidden for me in my domain to think what the political implications are of one decision or another," said Frenkel. "If I do, then I ask how much of an interest rate [cut] is it worth to keep this minister or to bring in another finance minister. That is not my playing field."

Later in the day Meridor quipped to the Knesset Finance Committee that he did not realize he was worth 1.2%.

Meridor gave MKs a broad overview of the economy during the government's first year in



Outgoing Finance Minister Dan Meridor (left) and director-general Shmuel Slavin drink a toast at a meeting of senior Treasury staff members yesterday.

sor of the difficulties that lie ahead, including settling the budget and the ongoing budgetary deficit, privatization, wage settlements and above all else the country's monetary policy.

The Bank of Israel and its gov-

emor believe differently, which is their right, but with all due respect he is also the government's [economic] adviser and the responsibility is upon the government," said

Meridor. "It is not legitimate, in my eyes, in such a sensitive issue as the diagonal strip for him to come to me and say I want to widen it. When I say I am opposed, that should be the end of the matter.

"If the debate is carried out in public through journalists, and the leaks did come from two buildings not too far from each other [a reference to the Prime Minister's Office and Bank of Israel] to the effect that the decision would be to widen the band, causing \$500m. to be sold in one day, this is not right on the part of a central bank Frenkel, meanwhile, explained

yesterday the order of events during the discussion between himself, Meridor and Netanyahu, that led in part to Meridor's resignation: Meridor and Frenkel were close that point entered Netanyahu's room. The prime minister asked Frenkel if he could live with the existing exchange rate mechanism but accept the other agreed changes in the budgetary and liberalization spheres. Frenkel replied that, as the government's economic adviser, he firmly recommended the expansion of the diagonal band, but as the governor of the Bank of Israel he could only abide by and implement government policy.

Prime minister, finance minister, if you decide not to change the exchange-rate band. I can live with that, but you must be aware of one thing: There will be a cost to continuing with the existing method," said the governor.

At that point, Frenkel and Meridor left Netanyahu's room thinking they had reached agreement that there would be no change in the mechanism.

Some three minutes later, Netanyahu called them both back in and asked Frenkel once again about the implications of the various options open to the govern-ment. Then he turned to Meridor and asked why he opposed a compromise solution. From that point on according to Frenkel, the issue was opened once again, eventually leading to the cabinet debate and Meridor's resignation. When asked if it was fair that

central bank's key lending rate was to be reduced 1.2% the following day, after his resignation, Frenkel replied that Meridor knew there would be an impending announcement, However, Frenkel added, even he. as governor, did not know what the announcement would be until he had held discussions on Wednesday morning with senior to reaching a compromise and at central bank economists.

Meridor did not know that the

## New shekel mechanism to increase arbitrage

#### By JENNIFER FRIEDLIN and DAVID HARRIS

The change in the Bank of Israel's exchange-rate band mecbanism is likely to lead to an arbitrage dea Hebrew University professor of public finance Eitan Sheshinsky said yesterday. Until now, the so-called diago-

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shekel to appreciate or depreciate its major trading partners. against the basket of currencies (US dollar, Japanese yen, German mark, British pound, and French franc) by 7 percent in either direce central bank intervention. The central diagonal line between the bands, set at zero, is a reflection of the difference between Israel's inflation target

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nal mechanism has allowed the and inflationary estimates among This week the Bank of Israel

announced two key changes: while the slope of the upper band will remain at 6%, the lower band will rise at only 4%; this leads to second change - that the shekel will be able to freely float up to 15% in either direction. The 4% change to the slope is already in force, and the 15% limit will be reached in a year.

This moderation of the lower band's slope will lead to increased arbitrage possibilities, according to Shesbinsky, meaning that traders will buy dollars abroad in shekel deposits, thus taking advantage of the Bank of Israel's still relatively high interest rates.

been flowing into the country because of the high interest rate returns. If the lower slope remains at 4% and the gap increases between the diagonal and the lower band, there is an attraction for added capital inflow.

"I am therefore not sure that the 1.2% interest rate cut is suffi-

cient," Furthermore, the current shekel order to sell them here and make exchange rate means Israeli exporters cannot successfully compete abroad, and with imports relatively inexpensive, it is likely balance of payments problem will remain. "If the influx of capital condn-

said

ues, the bank will have to take further steps to stem it," added Sheshinsky, who pointed out the central bank has purchased \$6.5 billion this year to keep the shekel above the lower limit of the diag-

## **IEC** issues criteria for private Negev power station

#### By DAVID HARRIS

The first tender for the largescale private generation of electricity is for a 370 megawatt recycling power station in the Negev, the Israel Electric Corporation announced yesterday.

The total investment is expected to reach \$300 million, according the National Infrastructure

Until now, only four private companies have been awarding generating contracts, which between them will only generate 65 megawatts.

The Negev plant is the first large step on the path to fulfilling the new Electricity Law, which requires that 10 percent of all electricity be produced by the private sector, as an initial step to opening the sector to competition.

The law grants IEC a 10-year license, and the company says it is determined to fulfill all its requirements so that it receives an extension beyond 2006.

The new station will adjoin IEC's existing plant at Ramat Hovay. It will take the heat from the gas by-product in two or three turbines and use it to create additional electricity. This means the station can produce up to 50 percent more power without using additional fuel.

Reading between the lines... vou have time for trading action until 11 PM.

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The main fuel for the station will be natural gas, but fuel oil will be used as an alternative source.

The station will have to contain the latest technologies, but those which have a proven track record. The successful bidder will be asked to show its financial worth and be expected to cover at least 15 percent of the installation and construction costs from its own capital.

The new station will begin production in 2002, with a 20-year contract. The electricity will be sold to IEC or any other customer, dependent on the terms of the

The tender, which will be published internationally, has already

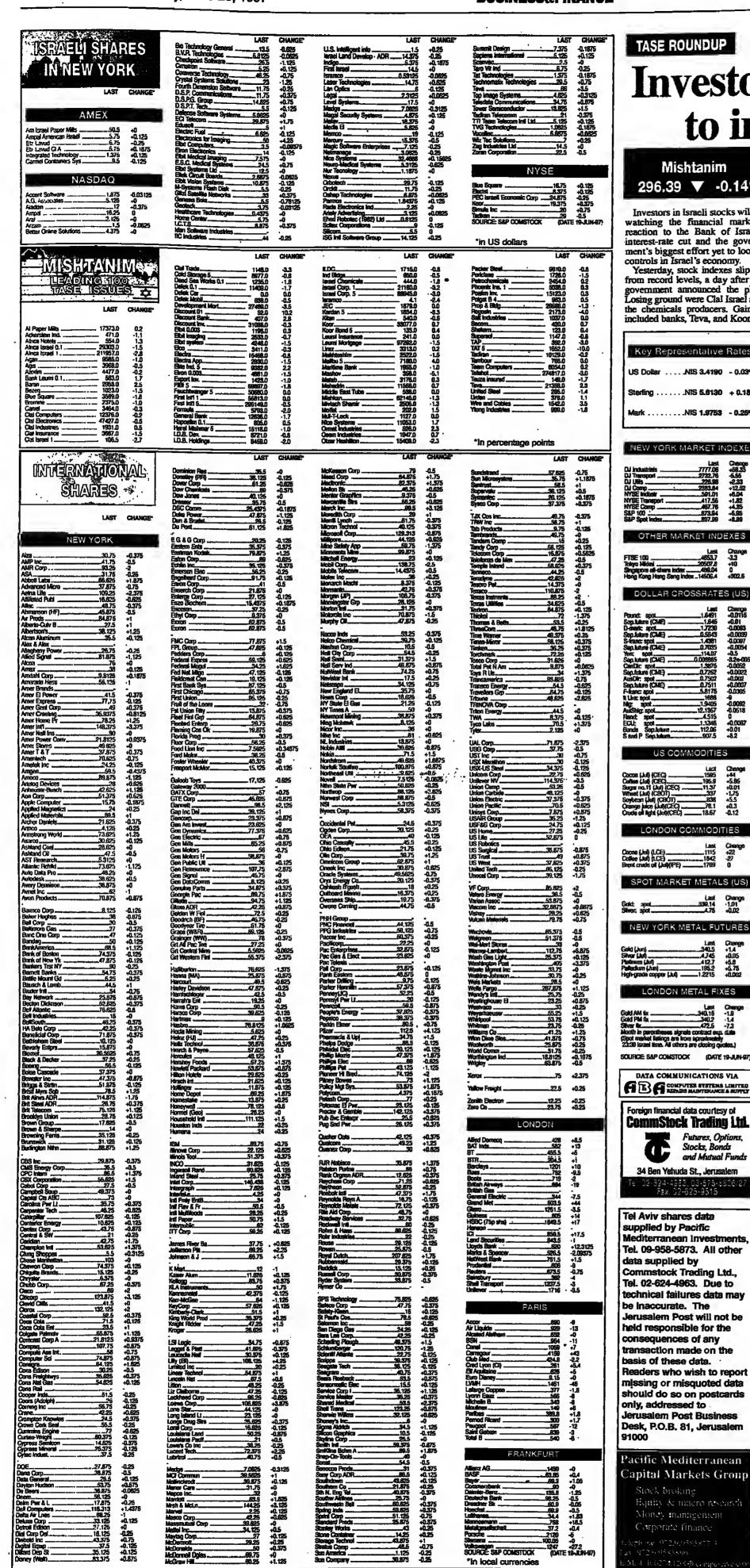
received a great deal of interest,

according to the National Infrastructure Ministry. Criteria for further power sta-

tions in the private sector will be drawn up by the ministry. A 1995 government decision calls for a total 900 megawatts to be produced in the private sector.

The first four firms to have been offered licenses will operate seven small plants The companies, all domestic, are BNL International Trade Holdings, Gan Shmuel Energy (based in the kibbutz of the same name), Ofer Ltd., and Mega Dan Timna. They will run two generators in Kiryat Shmona, and one each at Gan Shmuel, the Lavi industrial area near the Golani junction, Daliat al-Carmel, Kafr Maghar, and Timna.

#### ISRAEL MONEY MARKETS Patah (foreign currency deposit rates) (11.9.96) Currency (deposit for:) U.S. dollar (\$250,000) Pound sterling (£100,000) German mark (DM 200,000) 3 MONTHS 4.750 3.875 1.625 5.375 4.000 1.625 2.125 1.000 iss tranc (SF 200,000) Yen (10 million yen) Shekel Foreign Exchange Rates\* (19.6.97) **CHECKS AND TRANSFERS** BANKNOTES Buy Sell Rates\*\* 3.7584 3.4391 1.8880 0.5894 3.0400 0.4456 0.4756 0.5224 0.6647 2.4704 2.5737 0.7617 0.9638 2.8586 1.0500 1. Currency bas U.S. dollar 3.32 1.82 5.46 0.57 2.94 1.70 2.30 0.43 0.45 0.50 2.38 2.48 0.93 2.73 1.96 4.97 3.49 2.02 5.73 0.60 3.09 1.80 2.42 0.48 0.49 0.53 2.51 2.81 0.98 2.87 2.03 1.05 German mark Pound sterling 1.9564 5.5570 0.5800 2.9917 0.5854 3.0182 Dutch florin Swiss tranc Swedish krona Norwegian krone Danish krone 1.7386 2.3426 0.4385 0.4874 0.5141 0.8541 2.4311 Finnish mark 0.6599 2.4554 Canadian dolla 2.5328 0.7496 0.9485 2.7819 1.9984 4.7736 Australian dollar S. African rand 2.5800 0.7572 Belgian franc (10) Austrian schilling (10) Italian lira (1000) Jordanian dinar Egyptian pound ECU 4.8721 1.0770 3.8659 5.1555 3.8278 5.02 vary according to bank. "Bank of Israel, \*These rates SOURCE: BANK LEUM!



TASE ROUNDUP

## Investors watch reaction to interest-rate cut

Mishtanim 296,39 ▼ -0.14% Maof

305,54 ♥ -0.09%

Investors in Israeli stocks will be watching the financial market's reaction to the Bank of Israel's interest-rate cut and the government's biggest effort yet to loosen controls in Israel's economy.

Yesterday, stock indexes slipped from record levels, a day after the government announced the plan. Losing ground were Clal Israel and the chemicals producers. Gainers included banks, Teva, and Koor.

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Investors will be watching the market's reaction to the government plan, said Ella Golan, chief analyst at First International Bank of Israel. And they'll be waiting to see who succeeds Finance Minister Dan Meridor, who resigned in a dispute over the program.

The financial news is behind us," said Ilan Doron, a trader at Solid IB Ltd. in Tel Aviv. Even with the drop today, "there's less interest" in fixed-income investments and "a turn to other alterna-

tives," such as stocks. The Maof Index of 25 mosttraded issues slipped 0.09 percent to 305.54, and the Mishtanim Index of 100 stocks eased 0.14 percent to 296.39. The indexes rose 3.5% and 2.8% respectively for the week.

Across the Tel Aviv Stock

Exchange, NIS 208 million worth of shares traded. That's 11 percent less than the month's daily average of 234.1 million. Five issues fell for every four that rose.

Declining shares included Clai Israel Series 1, off 2.75%, percent at 1.065 shekels (\$0.31). Israel Corp. fell 3.25%, amid news reports that the heirs of Shoul Eisenberg, the holding company's late chief, were fighting for control.

"The whole question of manage-ment is open," said Eli Nahum, head of trading at Tel: Aviv firm Zannex Securities Ltd.

Chemicals producers dropped: Agan Chemical Manufacturers Ltd. fell 1%; Dead Sea Bromine Ltd. eased 1%; Dead Sea Works Ltd. dropped 1.75%; Makhteshim fell 1.5% and Israel Chemicals Ltd. shed 1.5%.

WALL STREET WEEK

## Dow falls just short of record

NEW YORK (Reuter) - Bluechip stocks went higher yesterday, bouncing back strongly from three straight sessions of lower closes as the mood on Wall Street turned positive on news of record US exports and a rise in weekly jobless claims. Based on early and unofficial results, the Dow Jones industrial

average ended up 58.35 points at 7,777.06, standing just below its record closing high of 7,782.04 set on June 13.

In the broader market, advancing issues swamped declines by a wide 2-1 margin on active volume of 540 million shares on the New York Stock Exchange.

#### WORLD MARKET ROUNDUP

## FTSE records fourth straight fall

LONDON (Reuter) - Britain's levels in late trade, after a correc-FTSE 100 share index clawed back tion in Btp bond futures, with profmost of its early losses, but falled to clamber into positive territory, suffering its fourth fall in a row with a modest drop of 3.3 points to 4,653.7. The FTSE 100 closed at 4653.7,

down 3.3 points, or 0.07 percent. FRANKFURT - Germany's IBIS DAX index rose to within a whisker of the magic 3,800 point level in late trade on Wednesday, with derivatives and with few fundamental reasons for the advance. The DAX-30 index closed at 3749.27, up 19.00 points, or 0.51%. In later screen-based trade, the IBIS DAX index ended at 3777.56, up 47.00

points, or 1.26%. PARIS - French shares finished down but well above their lows, after Socialist Prime Minister Lionel Jospin outlined his government's program to parliament. The CAC-40 index closed at 2739.69. down 12.05 points, or 0.44%.

ZURICH - Swiss shares jumped 2%, driven by massive gains in index-heavyweight Novartis and derivatives-linked buying. The blue-chip Swiss Market Index (SMI) ended above 5.500 points for the first time. The Swiss market index closed at 5510.3, up 105.3 points, or 1.95%.

MILAN - Italian shares ended firm but slipped back from higher

tion in Btp bond futures, with profit-taking seen on selected major stocks after both the Mib30 blue chip index and the Fib30 futures index had again touched new highs, dealers said. The All Share Mibtel index closed at 13058, up 128 points, or 0.99%.

AMSTERDAM !- Dutch blue chips swept to a new record close, as Wall Street's opening surge gave. buoyed by gains in several major component stocks. The AEX index closed at 856.59, up 7.46 points, or.

HONG KONG - Hong Kong stocks surged, with the blue-chip-Hang Seng Index closing above the 14,500 mark on a strong rebound by property and bank stocks, brokers said. The Hang Seng index closed at 14,506.49, up 302.60 points, or 2.13%.

SYDNEY - Australian stocks limped through early trade, but recovered to reach full stride late in the day and end on their fifth record close in a week. The All Ordinaries index closed at 2693.3, up 19.9 points, or 0.74%.

JOHANNESBURG - South African gold shares tumbled to new lows, as renewed woes on the international bullion price launched a fresh assault on the already bombed-out index, dealers said.

#### **ARABS** Continued from Page 2

Under such circumstances, the perception of stability and consistency in governmental policy was substantially impaired, and the assumption that Israel's current negotiating stance may be about to change gained credibility.

Clear-cut evidence of the crisis's impact on Israel's diplomatic activity could be detected in Foreign Minister David Levy's decision to cancel a projected trip to the US, where he was scheduled to address a UN conference on the environment

Foreign Ministry aides said Levy decided it would be preferable for him to remain in Jerusalem at this stage, especially in the light of a possible no-confidence vote in the Knesset next week and while the various cabinet portfolios are being reshuffled. He had planned to leave tomorrow night.
In the midst of the Netanyahn-

Meridor showdown, Israeli negotiators not only flew to Cairo to meet Egyptian presidential aide Osama el-Baz, but also reported that their talks with him "went well."

The prime minister's media adviser, David Bar-Illan, said el-Baz probably will "make another hop to Gaza and Jerusalem," but was unable to specify a timetable. Netanyahu evidently discussed the el-Baz mission by telephone

with President Hosni Mubarak yesterday, but no details of their conversation were released.

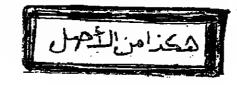
Before leaving Cairo, cabinet secretary Danny Naveh, speaking to the Associated Press, expressed appreciation for "the efforts made by President Mubarak and Egypt to bridge the gap, which still exists" between the Israeli and Palestinian sides.

El-Baz's purpose is to work out a formula ou the basis of which Israel and the PA can resume the negotiations which were severed three months ago when the Har Homa housing project was launched in eastern Jerusalem.

Another Middle East mediator, pain's Miguel Moratinos, who has been acting as the European: Union's peace envoy, was due to confer with Syrian President Hafez Assad in Damascus yesterday.

Israeli officials who talked to Moratinos shortly before his departure for Syria found him upbeat and optimistic. This impression coincided with what were termed "positive rumblings" from Damascus to the effect that the Syrians are looking for a way to return to the negotiating table.

However, Moratines is delaying his return to Jerusalem, purportedly because he thought if wise to take a longer look at the situation m Syria, but actually because he may not want to reappear in Israel before the current cabinet crisis is resolved and the domestic political situation stabilizes.



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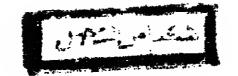
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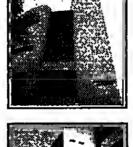
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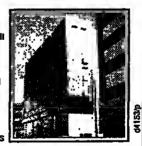


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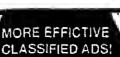
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Mount Scopus cempus In English, daily Sun-Thur, 11 a.m. Irom Brontman Recep-tion Centre, Sherman Administration Bldg.

Buses 4a,9,23,26,26. For into, cell

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Tel Aviv: Ariosoroff, 76 Ariosoroff, 523-

0746; Briut, 28 King George, 528-3731.

Ra'anana-Kfar Sava: Doron, 8 Geula,

Netanya: Hanassi, 36 Weizmann, 882-

Krayot area: Krayot, 1 Hahagana, Kiryat

Herzilya: Clai Pharm, Beit Merkazim, 6

Maskit (cnr. Sderot Hegalim), Herziya Pituah, 955-8472, 955-8407. Open 9 a.m.

Upper Nazareth: Clal Phann, Lev Ha'ir

Jerusalem: (dey) Super Pharm, Gilo Commercial Center, 676-1673; (evening)

Kupat Holim Clalit, Straue A, 3 Avigdori

670-6860; (day and evening) Balsam Salah e-Din, 627-2315; Shuafat, Shusfat

Road, 581-0108; Dar Aldawa, Herod's

Gate, 628-2058.Tel Aviv: Habimah, 17

Orzengoff, 528-8465; Bloch, 32 Bloch, 522-6425. Till midnight: Superpharm

3730; Superpharm London Ministore, 4

Ra'anana-Kfar Sava: (dey) Magdiel, 54 Derech Magdiel, Hod Hasharon, 741-

5567; (evening) Haragil, 47 Rothschild,

Netanya: Geva, 14 Sha'ar Hagai, 882-

Haifa: Kiryat Eliezer, 6 Mayerholf Sq.,

Krayol area: Superpharm, Hakiryon, 44

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Hapalmah, Kiryat Bialik, 877-9320.

mat Aviv, 40 Einstein, Ramat Aviv, 641-

Mail. 657-0468. Open 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Saturday, June 21

Shaul Hamelech, 696-0115.

Ktar Sava, 767-0908.

Haita: Balfour, 1 Massada, 862-2289.

m: Kupat Holim Clalit, Straus A.

**EMERGENCY** 

**PHARMACIES** 

Friday, June 20

Gate, 628-2058.

Ra'anana, 771-6084.

Blatik, 872-1665.

to 5 o.m.

ART GUIDE

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HEBREW UNION COLLEGE, 13 King David St. Shabbat morning service, 9:30

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WHERE TO GO

HAIFA

WHAT'S ON IN HAIFA, dial 04

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Friday, June 20

Saturday, June 21

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ART GUIDE

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ART GUIDE

**TEL AVIV** 

TEL AVIV MUSEUM OF ART. Soviet Photography from the Museum Collection "Andres Serranc: The Morgue; "Zvi Hecker: Sunflower "Lucian Freud: Works from the eerly 1940s through the mid-1990s; Porraits - by e group of Israeli artists. Ra'anan Levy: Drawings; Virtual Reality - the domestic and realistic in consemporary lereell ert. NELEN RUBINSTEIN PAVILION FOR CONTEMPORARY ART. Shlomo Ben-David end Arnon Ben-Devid, The Inverted Cempaign. Hours: 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Tue., 10a.m., -10 p.m. Fri., 10 a.m.-2, p.m., Sat., 10 a.m.-3; p.m. Meyerhoff Art Education Center, . Tel. 6919155-8.

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Mobile Intensive Care Unit (MiCU) ser-

Medical help for tourists (in English) 177-

Rambam Hospital, phone 04-852-9205 for emergency calls 24 hours e day, for infor-

Rape Crisis Center (24 hours), Tel Aviv 523-4819, 544-9191 (men), Jerusalem 625-5558, Haifa 853-0533, Eilat 633-

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Kupat Nolim Information Center 177-022-1906, Sunday-Thursday, 8 a.m. to 2

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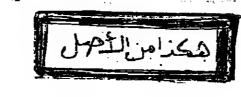
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GENERAL

ARIE PALOGE The Clinton administration bas QUALITY NEW &USED CARS asked the government for permission to meet with Deputy Education Minister Moshe Peled TAX FREE & UNRESTRICTED Buying - Selling - Trading - Leasing Celebrating 25 Years - Countrywide Service Passport - Passport - Our Specialty Tel. 050-240-977, Tel./Fax. 02-652-3736 to discuss his assertion in March that Yasser Arafat was privy to the 1993 attempt to blow up New York's World Trade Center, in

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UNRESTRICTED CABH FOR CARS, new/ueed, sales/ trade. Auto Deal, Tomer Dotan, Tel. 02-6737676; 050-387-192. Arafat link to WTC bombing Reno to her counterpart Elyakim Rubinstein, asked for an urgent meeting between an American government representative and Peled. The sources said the administration has come under pressure from the US Congress

to investigate Peled's assention. There is a lot of pressure in Congress to use this information as the smoking gun to stop all US aid to the Palestinian Authority," a diplomatic source said. The source said Rubinstein

approved the US request to question Peled after the deputy minister agreed as well. Under Israeli law, the attorney-general has to approve the investigation of any national by a foreign power.

Rubiostein, through Justice Ministry spokesman Etty Eshed,

confirmed that he met with Peled concerning the US request.

US asks to see Peled over

"In accordance with a request from the international department of the US Attorney-General's Office. the [Rubinstein] turned to Peled," Eshed said. She did not elaborate.

A source in the Prime Minister's Office said Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu bas not been involved in the contacts between Israel and the US regarding Peled. The source said the forthcoming meeting should not be construed as an attempt by the Netanyahu government to damage Arafat or

try to stop US aid to the PA. A source said that US investigators will also be meeting with intelligence sources and a media source who lived in the Arab world.

In March, Peled told the Post

that Israeli intelligence has evidence that Arafat arrived in Khartoum several days before the World Trade Center bombing and attended the discussions of the plot held by Sudanese leaders and Islamic terrorist operatives.

Peled's assertion sparked calls in US Congress for an investigation into Arafat's role in the conspiracy. On April 1. Sen. Arlen Specier, former chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, sent a let-

ter to Reno asking for an investigation. "It appears to me, that if true, Arafat would be prosecutable under US criminal laws," Specier

wrote. "I would appreciate your advice as to what indictments could be brought as to Chairman Arafat." On April 29, Assistant Attorney-General Andrew Fois responded

unaware of Arafat's involvement in the conspiracy, adding that Israeli authorities deny the accuracy of the statements attributed to Peled. The deputy minister, following his loterview with the Post, reiterated his assertion to several Israeli radio stations.

Rain de

security

apped up in

Specier countered that the attorneygeneral's response was insufficient and called in Congress for a genuine

investigation into Peled's remarks. Sources said Peled has consistently referred government officials to Israeli intelligence agencies.

Asked last night whether he will meet with a US official to discuss Arafat's role in the bombing, the deputy minister said, "I am not going to comment. This is not something I want to discuss or even confirm."

## Knesset to get list of MKs to be questioned in Ben-Ari case

By RAINE MARCUS

National Investigations chief Cmdr. Sando Mazor will meet with Koesset Speaker Dan Tichon on Sunday to provide him with a list of public figures - cabinet ministers and Knesset members - whom police wish to summon to give evidence in the Zvi Beo-Ari (also known as

Gregory Lemer) case, and to discuss procedures.

The list is expected to cootain more than 10 politicians, from the Likud, Labor, and Yisrael Ba'aliya parties, who police believe can shed light on Ben-Ari's activities and alleged financial crimes here.

Mazor emphasized that, 9t this stage, nooe of those summoned

will be questioned uoder cau-tion, but will simply be asked to have postponed summoning other tion, but will simply be asked to give evidence.

Police are concentrating on financial crimes allegedly committed by Ben-Ari here, namely tax fraud, violating banking laws, and his connection to an \$85 million scam allegedly carried out in Russia. Politicians, including ministers, are expected to be summoned starting next week to the National Crimes Squad's Petah

Tikva headquarters. The first to give evidence was former Labor Party secretary-general Nissim Zvilli, who met with Ben-Ari three times after the latter offered him and the party free air time on Russian television for Labor propaganda campaigns. Zvilli refused. Since then, because

public figures.

Regarding suspicions that Ben-Ari was responsible for the murder of 9 banker in Russia and the plot to kill another, police here have frozeo the investigation for lack of cooperation from their Russian counterparts and since the crimes were committed abroad.

Police now have to persuade Attorney-General Elyakim Attorney-General Rubinstein to authorize the further remand of Ben-Ari this Sunday, wheo he is due to appear in Petah Tikva Magistrate's Court. Rubinstein already authorized a further remand after Ben-Ari had been in custody for 30 days, as is required by law.

# The Jerusalem Post's

which six people were killed.
Sources said the US request, which

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By BEVERLEE BLACK

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education. The NIS 30,000 came from your donations to the Welcome Home Fund. We've also given NIS 30,000 to eight students at the Ben-Gurion University of

the Negev. Education is the key to a successful society, and ensuring that new immigrants are not left on the sidelines is the reason for our Welcome Home Fund.

I'm very concerned at the slow pace of contributions and I appeal to all our readers and their friends not to let those in need be left out.

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will be disappointed.
Your generosity is the decisive factor in how much we can do. Mail your checks to: The Jerusalem Post Funds, P.O. Box gl, Jerusalem 91000. Our new phone number is (02) 537-6528. Donors in the United States wishing to receive tax benefits can send their donations to:

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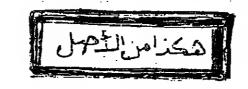
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No. of the second No. of No. of Street, or other teams. Stever Res 0H 56 Keith Wood in the Test front row. THE RESERVE HE True Property Totals the stations Visite

not considered for selection was Irish number eight Eric Miller who has the flu. "It's more than just a bug - he is

still in bed now and is likely to be for a couple more days," Cotton said.

selected for tomorrow's starting line-up, while four players - tour captain Martin Johnson, Jeremy Guscott, Scott Gibbs and Ieuan Evans - were Test members of the 1993 Lions side which toured New Zealand.

very close for selection by England's John Bentley, will play E REAL STREET on the left wing while Welshman Scott Gibbs is set to resume his successful Lions parmership with

British Lions: Neil Jenkins

Catt, Austin Healey, Rob Wainwright, Jason Leonard, Barry

to wait one more day before becoming England's longest-The first day's play in the Second Ashes Test was called off without a ball bowled yesterday when umpires David

Shepherd and Srinivas Venkataraghavan made their third and final inspection before announcing the inevitable decision. Until Australian captain Mark Taylor and Atherton start the

match officially with the toss, the England skipper will remain level with Peter May's record of 41 Tests at the helm. The first day of the Lord's Test is always a sell-out, but by the late afternoon fans began leaving the ground.

The only entertainment for the die-hard supporters was on the giant Lord's television screen which showed highlights

LONDON (AP) - Persistent rain forced Michael Atherton of classic Ashes encounters, including England's emphatic nine-wicket First-Test win at Edgbaston two weeks ago. According to chief executive Tim Lamb, the England and Wales Cricket Board will refund £600,000 to the disap-

Rain delays Atherton's captaincy record

The first four days of the much-awaited Test are sold out, attracting a revenue of £2.65 million, making it the most subscribed Test match in the history of the Marylebone

There was some hope of play in the early afternoon when dark clouds made way for bright sunshine and the huge covers protecting the hallowed Lord's turf were pulled off.

"We were hopeful two hours ago, but when we came out to inspect it was very dark and rain was in the air, conditions

not conducive to starting a Test match," said Shepherd. It is the first time a full day's play has been lost at Lord's since the Sunday's play was lost in 1991 against the West Indies. The last time play was lost for an entire day in a Test between Australia and England at Lord's was in 1964.

It leaves just four days of play, but that was all England needed at Edgbaston to take its 1-0 lead in the six-match

Australia has won its last three Tests here while England

haven't won at Lord's since 1934. Lord's has hosted 30 Ashes Tests, with Australia winning

12 and England just five - four of them last century.

The weather forecast for the next three days is much the same as it was for yesterday - rain.

#### Security stepped up at Wimbledon

LONDON (Reuter) - Security at this year's Grand Slam Tennis tournament at Wimbledon is being stepped up, the All-England Club confirmed yesterday, with officials and police eager to avoid a repeat of April's Grand National

"Security has been increased and the Grand Nanonal was taken into account. We liaise very closely with police on these matters," an All-England spokesman said.

A bomb scare balted April's Grand National steeplechase. The race was postponed for two days. The spokesman confirmed that

two car parks would be moved to create a "sterile" area of around 200 meters along one of the main roads, but he stressed that the changes would not hugely inconvenience spectators. "We're not sending spectators

off to the middle of nowhere." he said, estimating that people using the car parks, previously situated on the golf course, would have to walk a further 400 meters.

Visitors using public transport or other car parks would not be

All bags will be searched when spectators enter the grounds and all vehicles will be checked as part of the increased security measures. In addition, closed circuit television cameras with recording equipment will scan the con-

"The safety of all our visitors... is of paramount importance," Christopher Gorringe, chief executive of the club said in a state-

The championships, which start on Monday, are expected to attract around 400,000 visitors over the two weeks. Heather Chait adds:

Rain yesterday postponed several qualifying matches including nated his former team, and didn't two Israelis. Oren Montvassel was scheduled to play 1987 Wimbledon winner Pat Cash, and Eyal Ehrlich was slated to go up aganst Jan Heodrick Davids from the Netherlands.

Three Israelis have already been sent packing. Eyal Ran, Raviv Weidenfeld and Noam Behr all lost in their qualifying

#### Leonard omitted from Lions' side

CAPE TOWN (Reuter) - Prop Jason Leonard was a surprise omission from the British Lions side named yesterday to face South Africa in the opening Test of the three-match series in Cape

Leonard will be on the bench for tomorrow's match at Newlands with Ireland's tighthead prop Paul Wallace and Scotland loosehead Tom Smith partnering Irish booker

Lions manager Fran Cotton faced difficult choices with so many players in good form. The only member of the 35-man squad

Six Englishmen have been

Scottish center Allan Tait, run the creative Jeremy Guscott in the

January's program was not "family-oriented." leuan Evans, Jeremy Guscott, The broadcast during the Scott Gibbs, Allan Tair, Gregor Green Bay Packers' victory over Townsend, Matt Dawson; Tim the New England Patriots Rodber, Richard Hill, Lawrence included James Brown singing Daliaglio, Jeremy Davidson, "Get Up (I Feel Like Being a) Martin Johnson (captain), Paul Sex Machine" and rock group Wallace, Keith Wood, Torn Smith. ZZ Top playing songs such as Substitutes: John Bentley, Mike "Legs." Oscar Mayer was the halftime show's sole sponsor the

past two years.



SWIPE - Tigers' Brian Hunter steals second as Marlins' Luis Castillo takes Inte throw. Detroit won 6-2.

## Yankees triumph in 'Subway Series'

NEW YORK (AP) - The homer for Florida. Yankees won New York's first Subway Series in 40 years, beating the Mets 3-2 in the decisive third game Wednesday on a 10thinning RBI single by Tino

For six innings, it appeared the cheering, chanting sellout crowd of 56,278 at Yankee Stadium was witnessing one of the most memo-Table afternoons in the history of New York baseball.

The Yankees' David Cone domiallow a hit until John Olerud's leadoff double in the seventh. But the Mets came back from a

2-0 deficit with single runs in the seventh and eighth, tying the game when Cone balked with pincbrunner Steve Bieser on third. Solo bomers by Chad Curtis and

Cecil Fielder off Rick Reed had given the Yankees their lead. Mike Stantoo (3-0) followed Cone and completed the three-bitter for the Yankees.

Expos 1, Orioles 0 Carlos Perez pitched an eight-hitter and Sherman Obando broke up Jimmy Key's perfect game with a sixth-inning bomer as visit-

ing Montreal won for the 11th time in 12 games. Key (11-2) retired the first 16 batters before Obando, a former Oriole who entered the game hitting .086, hit a 2-2 pitch inro the

left-field seats beyond the outstretched glove of a leaping BJ. Surhoff. That was ecough offense for Perez (8-4), who recorded his third shutout in his last four starts.

The left-hander has allowed just two earned runs this month in 34% innings. Tigers 6, Marlins 2 Omar Olivares pitched a fourhitter and Joe Hall, making his

first major league start in nearly two years, drove in three runs as host Detroit became the last team with an interleague victory. Detroit had lost five straight to NL teams, its longest losing streak

of the season. Florida starter Al Leiter (5-5) gave up seven hits and six runs in

three innings. Bobby Bonilla bit a two-run

Oscar Mayer

bows out

MADISON WI (AP) - Sexy

Oscar Mayer Foods Corp. is

pulling its sponsorship from the

broadcast, because last

songs have cost the Super Bowl

halftime show its sponsor.

Billy Ashley, Raul Mondesi and Todd Zeile each bit two-run homers to lead Los Angeles to a two-game home sweep. The two teams meet again in interleague play July 2-3 at

Dodgers 7, Angels 5

Anaheim Stadium. The game marked the first major league matchup of pitchers from Japan, with Anaheim reliever Shigetoshi Hasegawa coming on in the sixth inning while Dodger starter Hideo Nomo was still in the game. Neither, however, figured

in the decision. Rockies 10, Rangers 9 John Wetteland gave up a threerun homer to Andres Galarraga and a bases-loaded walk to Walt Weiss in the bottom of the ninth inning, handing Colorado a home win.

Wetteland, who allowed the Rockies to score three runs in the ointh inning on Tuesday night, came in to protect a 9-6 lead. Giants 4, Mariners 2

Mark Gardner allowed three hits in 7% innings, and Stan Javier hit. his third interleague homer as San Francisco completed a two-game home sweep.

Gardner (8-2), who retired the first 13 batters before allowing Jay Buhner's 17th homer in the fifth, struck out four and walked two. The second hit he allowed was Russ Davis' 10th homer leading

off the eighth,
Javier hit a solo bomer in the
sixth as the Giants won their fourth straight. He added a sacrifice fly in the eighth.

Javier has three homers this season, all since interleague play began last Thursday. Javier, who spent eight seasons in the AL, hit a two-run pinch-hit homer in the Giants' 4-3 win over Seattle on Tuesday night. Reds 5, Indians 2

In Cleveland, they may not have the best record in Obio, but the Cincinnati Reds are state champs. Journeyman Mike Remlinger shut out Cleveland on two hits through six innings and gave bragging rights to the Reds, who won the finale of the first regular-season all-Ohio series. The historic three-game series

The Reds took two of three from Cleveland, leaving both teams 3-3 in interleague play.
Blue Jays 5, Braves 3 Carlos Delgado hit a three-run

drew 128,727 - three straight sell-

outs at Jacobs Field, extending the

park's sellout streak to 163 games.

homer through the fog and as host Toronto avoided a three-game There was a 14-minute fog delay in the fourth inning. The game was

interrupted while the retractable roof at SkyDome was closing. John Smoltz (6-6), who won at Toronto in Game 5 of the 1992 26th of the season. All three came

World Series, was tagged for five runs in seven innings. The 1996 NL Cy Young winner gave up six bits and struck out seven. White Sox 3, Cnbs 0

Thanks to Wilson Alvarez, the White Sox rule the Windy City. Alvarez pitched a four-bitter for

his first shutout in more than three years as the White Sox defeated the Cubs to win the first regularseason crosstown series in Chicago history. The Cubs won the opener but the

White Sox rebounded to take the next two as the teams met in games other than exhibitions for the first time since the 1906 World Series. Wednesday's game drew 44,204

fans, the second consecutive sellout crowd and second-largest in new Comiskey Park bistory to Tuesday's 44,249. Brewers 8, Cardinals 4

Jeromy Burnitz hit a basesloaded triple and host Milwaukee won a three-game sweep. The loss left St. Louis with a t-5 record in interleague play. Red Sox 4, Phillies 2

Shane Mack, reviving a once stagnant season, hit a tiebreaking, two-run single in the seventh inning that led Boston to a bome

It was Boston's fifth victory in six games against NL opponents.
Philadelphia dropped to 1-5 after the first round of interleague

The three-game series drew 80.019, close to Boston's average at Fenway Park. Athletics 11, Padres 9

Canseco and Mark Jose

McGwire put on a show with tapemeasure home runs, but it was rookie Jason McDonald's first big league homer that gave Oakland a two-game road sweep. The win gave AL teams a 48-36

edge over NL clubs in this first round of interleague play. The AL-NL competition resumes June 30. McDonald's two-run homer off Padres relief ace Trevor Hoffman came with two outs in the eighth

and out the Athletics ahead 10-8. Canseco hit consecutive homers measuring 399 and 439 feet, and McGwire hit one 434 feet, his off rookie Will Cunnane.

American League

East Division	Division			
	W	L	Pct	GB
Baltimore	46	21	.686	_
New York	39	30	.565	8
Toronto	32	34	.485	13%
Boston	31	38	449	16
Detroit	30	37	448	16
Central Divisi		•		
Cleveland	35	31	.530	_
Kansas City	33	34	.493	2%
Milwaukee	333333333333333333333333333333333333333	34	.493	2%
Chicago	32	36	.471	4
Minnesota	32	37	464	4%
West Division	_	•		
Seattle	38	31	.551	_
Texas	38	31	.537	1
Anabeim	34	34	.500	3%
Oakland	30	41	.423	9

#### **National League**

W	L	Pcl	GB
44	26	.629	-
41		.594	2%
40	29	.580	3%
37	32	.536	6.4
22	46	.324	21
On			
34	37	.479	_
33	36	.478	-
31	38	.449	2
29	40	.420	4
28	42	.400	54
	29	.580	_
37	33	.528	3:
34	35	.493	6
29	40	.420	11
	W 44 41 40 37 22 on 34 33 31 29 28 40 37	W L 44 26 41 28 40 29 37 32 22 46 on 34 37 33 36 29 40 28 42 40 29 37 33 34 35	W L Pct. 44 26 .529 41 28 .594 40 29 .580 37 32 .536 22 46 .324 on 34 37 .479 33 36 .449 29 40 .420 28 42 .400 40 29 .580 37 33 .593

Wednesday's interleague results: NY Yankees 3, NY Mets 2 (10); Detroit 6, Florida 2; Minnesota 8, Pinsburgh 2; Montreal 1, Baltimore 0; Colorado 10, Texas 9; San Francisco 4, Seattle 2; Boston 4, Philadelphia 2; Cincinnati 5, Cleveland 2; Toronto 5. Atlanta 3; Milwaukee 8, St. Louis 4; Chicago White Sox 3, Chicago Cubs 0; Kansas City 6, Houston 2; Los Angeles 7, Anaheim 5; Oakland 11,

#### New giant for Maccabi TA hoopsters

(ltim) - US basketball player Richard Griffith, 22, is set to sign with Maccabi Tel Aviv. The 2.11-meter center has played the last two years with Turkish club Tofas.

#### Celeric wins Ascot

LONDON (Reuter) - Celeric (with Pat Eddery up), an 11-2 pick, won the Ascot Gold Cup yesterday, a group one race for four-year-olds and upwards, run over 25 miles. Placing threequarters of a length behind, was Classic Cliche, at 6-1 (Frankie Dettori) and in third, a further length back, was 25-1 shot Election Day with Michael Kinane up. Persian Punch was the 9-2 favorite in the 13-horse race.

The winner, owned by Christopher Spence and trained by David Morley, won £113,556.

#### Thieves steal Melbourne Cup

MELBOURNE (Reuter) - Police are searching for thieves who galloped off with the 1973 trophy from the Melbourne Cup, Australia's most famous horse race, from a racing club display cabinet.

The distinctive three-handled trophy, valued at \$19,000, was discovered missing yesterday from the Victoria Racing Club's committee room, but may have been stolen at any time in the past few weeks, said spokesman Terry Clifton.

The comminee room is only used on race days, and because the trophy is in a cabinet with a lot of other trophies...you could

walk past it without noticing it was gone," he said.

Police have appealed for help with the trophy's recovery. The 1973 Melbourne Cup, won by Gala Supreme, was donated to the club by the horse's late owner. First run in 1861, the race is one of the world's richest, with a new trophy every year.

#### Bulls in McDonald's line-up

PARIS (Reuter) - NBA champions Chicago Bulls have completed the six-team line-up for the McDonald's world club championship in Paris in October.

The organizers said NBA commissioner David Stern had confirmed on Wednesday that the Bulls would take part in the

October 16-18 championship at the Palais Omnisports in Bercy. The other participants are European champions Olympiakos of Greece, Spain's Barcelona, Benetton Treviso of Italy, French champions PSG Racing and Argentina's Atenas de Cordoba.

#### Sydney Harbor clean-up ordered

SYDNEY (Reuter) - Highly toxic waste will be removed from the waters of Sydney Harbor near the site of the 2000 Olympic Games in a clean-up costing \$15.7 million, the New South Wales state government said yesterday.

The operation involves the removal of dioxin contaminants from sediment in Homebush Bay, which is adjacent to the main Olympic complex.

Swimming in that part of Sydney Harbor is prohibited because of the heavy pollution, The Homebush area of western Sydney, now a massive

Olympic building site, was in the past a site for heavy industry. Environmentalists Greenpeace said earlier this month that Homebush Bay was, lamentably, "the new dioxin capital of the

#### Catholic magazine warns of 'Ronalditis'

ROME (Reuter) - Italy's best-selling weekly magazine warned readers yesterday that Ronaldo, expected to be signed by Inter, was a symbol of spendthrift soccer and the country's reluctance to confront its problems.

Famiglia Cristiana, sold in parish churches across the country and found in most doctors' surgeries and dentists' waiting rooms, devoted its cover to an action shot of the Brazilian striker and warned of 'Ronalditis' - which it called an "infantile disease of footballing neoliberalism". "He, Ronaldo, maybe does

oot know it, young and inexperienced as he is in maners Italian, but in his way he is a symbol," the magazine added in an editorial.

"Ronaldo, wbo looks set to leave Barcelona for Inter after endless conjecture and protracted

Ronaldo on-off negotiations, has obsessed Italians for mouths. If, as expected he does join Inter next season, he will become

#### the world's most expensive player at an estimated \$55 million. **Delta Center extortionist nabbed**

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) - The FBI on Wednesday arrested a man accused of threatening to blow up the Delta Center this week unless paid an undisclosed sum by Jazz owner Larry

Richard L. Christiansen, 43 was arrested by the bureau's Violent Crimes Task Force, Woods Cross Police Department and investigators from the US Postal Service, said Thomas Kubic, special agent in charge of the FBI's Salt Lake City Division. Christiansen is charged with two counts of making threatening communications through the mail, each punishable by up to five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

In letters mailed to two of Miller's auto dealerships, the Jazz owner was instructed to deliver money to a semi-secluded spot in a field near Sky Park Airport in Woods Cross, according to

A package was placed at the field, and Christiansen was arrested following a short vehicle pursuit when he retrieved the box, said FBI special agent Dale Weiss. "He was caught red-handed," she said.

## Lack of knowledge bedevils Cape Town 2004 Olympic bid

JOHANNESBURG (AP) - Chris Ball Town as finalists in March. doesn't fear politics or lack of development or crime will derail his bid committee's efforts to get Cape Town chosen host of the 2004 Olympics.

He fears a lack of knowledge. Most people outside of South Africa, including many of the 109 voting members of the International Olympic Committee, know little about the coastal city or the country, Ball told journalists

yesterday. "People get off the plane and say, 'Well, we didn't know. We didn't understand," he said of visiting IOC members when they see the modern amenities and infrastructure in

Ball, a former banker who is chief executive officer of the Cape Town bid committee, needs more than half the IOC voters to obtain some understanding before the decision gets made on September 5.

Ball knows Cape Town has the sentimental edge, offering the first serious bid for Africa to host an Olympics with the bonus of giving the IOC a chance to back President Nelson Mandela and the transition from apartheid to democracy.

European candidates all have strong credentials and Cape Town is considered a long shot to win. "It's certainly going to go into the sec-ond, third and fourth round," Ball said of

the September vote. "Nobody is brave

enough now to predict who the winner

So his committee is trying to get more than 60 IOC members to visit Cape Town by September. Like all bid finalists, it has glossy brochures and press kits to tout its

A special magazine on the Cape Town bid features a full-page portrait of Mandela on

Cape Town, with most events and facilities in walking distance of one another. It fails to mention that most of the stadi-

ums and other facilities still must be built by a nation struggling to meet development needs of millions of blacks neglected during But that may not be enough. The But Ball, who speaks with silky smooth-

ness, turns that into a positive, noting that development and construction means jobs, training and an expanded tax base.

"The key is in all your proposals ... that you're planning something that's good for the city," he said. "Cape Town is a special environment. It's not every city in the world. ... It needs a plan."

He shrugged off questions about political squabbling that marred the early days of the Cape Town bid and reappeared last week in newspaper stories about Sports Minister Steve Tshwete criticizing the racial makeup

The articles distorted the situation, Ball strengths of the Cape Town bid, he said,

compact nature of the Olympic venues in said, and the government and bid committee worked closely together to present Cape Town as the candidate for South Africa all of Africa.

Everyone wanted the same goal - an expected boost in development, gross domestic product and job creation, he

"If you have a good run politically ... then the effect will be massive," Ball said.

Ball emphasized aspects of the Cape Town bid unmatched by the other candidates. The torch relay, for example, would run through some 30 African countries to give the world a different view of the continent from the one provided on the nightly news, he said.

Obviously up on his homework, Ball cited the goals of modern Olympics founder Baron Pierre de Coubertin as another reason for choosing Cape Town. Coubertin wanted the Olympics to promote the human spirit and extend human development, two

Sports Editors: Joseph Hoffman and Ori Lewis Four other cities - Rome; Stockholm, of the bid committee. the cover. The press kit emphasizes the Athens and Buenos Aires - joined Cape

# Maxim Levy, UTJ clash over appointment

While the coalition is reeling under the fallout of Dan Meridor's resignation, the conversion bill issue, Yisrael Ba'aliya's demands that its preferred candidate he appointed ambassador to Russia, and the lingering Bar-On -Affair, a new crisis is in the offing. Gesher's Maxim Levy has resurrected an old dispute which could cause a showdown with United Torah Judaism.

Levy has announced he intends to submit his candidacy to a position on the committee which elects religious court judges. The position became vacant with the recent death of MK Avraham Stern (National Religious Party).

Last November, the elections for the Knesset's two appointees to the panel seriously rocked the coalition. Under the coalition agreement, one of the two committee members chosen by the Knesset must be from United Torah Judaism, but its candidate. Moshe Gafni, failed to get elected after several more coalition MKs, including Levy, put themselves forward for the post. Stern was elected as the coalition's appointment along with Labor's Uzi

Baram. Most coalition MKs had assumed that Gafni would be the only coalition candidate in the new elections following Stern's death, but with Levy's insistence on running, other MKs - particularly from NRP and Shas - are likely to announce that they will also try again for the post.

"Gesher didn't make any commitments, and I see myself as a suitable candidate," said Levy yesterday. "If Gafni wants to run, be can. I haven't asked for coalition support. I'm not scared of this or that coalition crisis. The [religious] factions have a number of positions which have been promised them. I don't think Agudat Yisrael [a part of United Torah Judaism] or anybody else should have a monopoly. The Knesset chooses individual candidates. It's not something that can be turned into a coalition demand."

But Gafni was obviously upset. The fact is that even today, I am the candidate of the coalition, he said. The question is: What kind of a coalition is this? They're turning the coalition into a jungle. It's a lack of an elemen-

tary political culture." Haim Shapiro contributed to abide by convert deal

The religious parties will abide by the compromise agreement between the Conservative and Reform movements and the government on the conversion bill, even though they do not agree to it in principle.

This was made clear yesterday by MK Moshe Gafni (United Torah Judaism), who said that his party would wait until June 30, to see if the petition regarding the conversion of adopted infants by Conservative rabbis is brought before the High Court. If it is not, Gafni said, bis party would agree to delay action on the bill "for some weeks."

According to the agreement, the Reform and Conservative are to suspend their petitions to the High Court, while a joint committee, including a representative each of the Conservative and Reform movements and five members from the coalition will reach a compromise agreement by September 15.

Gafni said his party does not agree to the participation of Conservative and Reform rabbis in the committee. "The coalition should come to a decision by itself, as with any other law," he said.

Prime Minister Binyamin

Netanyahu said that he believes the

issue is on its way to being settled: Speaking at the ceremony establishing an International Center on Jewish Identity at Bar-Ilan University, he said the compromise talks would soon get under way and he believes the results. will be positive.

"I don't want this year to be . remembered as the year the Jewish people was torn into

Reform and Conservative as an integral part of the Jewish people. There is no difference between Jew and and the Orthodox. Conservative, and Reform have valid arguments, he said.

Netanyahu also spoke to the leadership of the World Zionist Organization in Jerusalem, where Hadassah president Marlene Post presented him with a statement

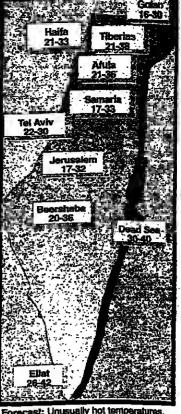
Netanyahn also said be sees the expressing the organization's "distress and dismay over the shocking disintegration of the unity of the Jewish people that we are witnessing in Israel."

She expressed concern that the

conversion bill or similar legislation might still be passed and the compromise agreement would only be yet another Band-Aid which will merely hold back the poison for a few more weeks or months."



Marlene Post, world president of Hadassah, yesterday presents Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu with a statement calling on him to work speedily for a broad consensus on the issue of religious pluralism.



Shabbat: Temperatures will continue to

AROUND THE WORLD



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## Conservative Movement condemns lesbian marriage ceremony

#### By HAIM SHAPIRO

Israel's Conservative movement yesterday condemned a marriage between two women performed by a Reform rabbi on Wednesday night, saying that it had crossed the "red line" in terms of Halacha (Jewish law) and it was a mistake to carry out such a marriage at this time.

The ceremony was performed in Tel Aviv by Rabbi David Ariel-Joel, rabbi of Jerusalem's Har-El Congregation. During the ceremony, held under a talit (prayer shawl), the two women exchanged rings

and each broke a glass.
Rabbi Einat Ramon, spokeswoman of the Conservative movement, said the movement opposes such rituals. "We see no way, according to Halacha, to make homosexual marriage a halachic norm, even though we recognized the rights of the gay community for civil rights," Ramon said, adding that it would also be a mistake to make such a marriage a norm, especially at a time when hetero-

sexual marriage had to be supported. Although Ramon did not mention the talks which were still continuing yester-

day between the coalition and Reform and Conservative movements over a compromise agreement regarding conversions carried out by the two movements in Israel, she did say that she thought the timing of the marriage ceremony was irresponsible."

MK Moshe Gafni (United Torah Judaism) said yesterday the wedding between two women is just additional proof that the Reform movement is only interested in destroying Judaism.

"The Reform are not really interested in conversion or marriage or in helping peo-

ple. They are only interested in overturning Judaism," Gafni said. The Reform, he said, had rejected the Torah, which was the basis of Jewish survival during all . the centuries of persecution.

The Council of Progressive Rabbis, the central body of Reform rabbis, yesterday denied the ceremony had been a marriage, but rather a "bonding ceremony" intended to make the relationship public. Rabbi Yoram Mazor, secretary of the CPR, said that Ariel-Yoel had allowed a talit to be used as a cariopy, contrary to the decision of the CPR, but there had been no tradi-

tional marriage contract, no wedding blessings, and the rings had been exchanged without halachic formulas.

Mazor said the CPR had been discussing homosexual ceremonies during the past two years, and while its rabbis had expressed themselves in favor of the basic need of every human being for love. warmth, and companionship, it sees the sanctity of the union of marriage between a man and a woman as the ideal. The CPR sees no possibility of conducting homosexual marriage ceremonies according to the law of Moses and Israel, Mazor said.



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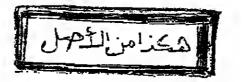
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